Foreword

Foreword by Sam Lake

It's done. I'm writing this foreword on the night we got the news that Quantum Break has gone gold, concluding the journey we embarked upon four, almost five years ago. Tomorrow at Remedy we will open a huge bottle of champagne with a "When it's done!" sticker on the side. As the creative director, I feel immensely proud of our accomplishment. Quantum Break was a long, hard project, my first big game in that role.

Why was it a hard project? Well, making games is fundamentally difficult. Games are defined by their technology, and that technology is advancing rapidly, which means that every new game project is a prototype project. You are trying to create something that no one has done before. There is no roadmap and the rules are changing; what was impossible before might well be possible now.

With Quantum Break we wanted to do so many new things: build it on a new platform; create new tools and engine with a big focus on the cutting-edge character technology and time-bending special effects, a genre that was new to us (sci-fi!); a new setting; a new story; new ensemble cast of characters; new core gameplay; Interactive narrative as a method of storytelling; big name actors; and a live-action show. Alone, each and every one of the items listed above is a challenge; put together it's borderline madness—but a good kind of madness, madness as ambition that we embraced gladly when given the trust and opportunity to do so by our publisher, Microsoft Studios. It took us close to five years to get there—a roller-coaster ride with a lot of concept work, prototyping, iteration, trial and error, and going back to the drawing board. Also a lot of learning moments, of both despair and triumph. And here we are.

Both of our previous games, Max Payne and Alan Wake, are very character-centric experiences. Everything you experience in them is filtered through the mind of the main character. Is it always night in all the New York levels in Max Payne, or is that just how Max sees the world? In Alan Wake you are playing a story that is the manuscript Alan Wake has written—a story that has come true. Quantum Break as a game is also character-centric in that it is Jack Joyce's hero's journey, his origin story as a superhero. But there's a very good reason why this game is not called Jack Joyce.

In the style of a TV show, Quantum Break is bigger than one character's story. You play as Paul Serene, as well, and in the show, you follow multiple other characters. Because of this ambition to achieve a wider perspective, for us it was more important than ever before that we create an immersive, cohesive, and believable universe, something that works not just from the perspective of one character, but of all of them. The ambition was always that we should have no feature, no element just for its own sake. Everything had to fit into the big picture, so that the whole of the end result is more than just the sum of its parts.

This included both the game and the show, and all the crossover elements between them, the history of the world, the architecture, the branding of Monarch Solutions—the company that opposes Jack in the game—as well as the fictional science around time breaking down and the time-related superpowers. A big part of this comes from the art direction. This book provides a glimpse into the planning, iteration, and work it took to get us to what Quantum Break is—its secret history, if you will.

I hope it will be illuminating!

Sam Lake
Creative Director, Remedy

Espoo, Finland
February 18th, 2016

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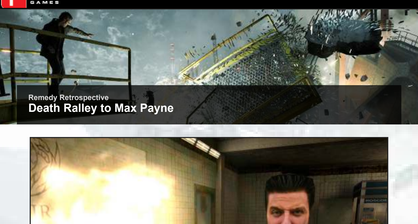


Remedy Retrospective

Death Ralley to Max Payne

In 2015, Remedy Entertainment turned 20. Being around for two decades is an achievement for any company, but it's particularly noteworthy when you're a relatively small independent game development house. In an industry where so-called triple-A games are now massive productions, often involving over a thousand people working directly on the products, finding opportunities and audiences for well-made and exciting games with personality is not a given. As modern games become more sophisticated and technically complex by the year, production costs and logistical challenges increase at a commensurate rate. This can present tremendous challenges.

At Remedy, we have succeeded in overcoming those challenges, and games like Max Payne, Max Payne 2: The Fall of Max Payne, Alan Wake, and now Quantum Break have been designed not only as engaging and exciting action games, but also as smart and engaging experiences full of character.

But we didn't start out quite like that.

The roots of Remedy are firmly in the legendary Finnish demoscene of the '90s, a community of technically minded, creative individuals who had the skill and the passion to make the 3D graphics and audio hardware of the time, quite primitive by modern standards, do amazing things. The demoscene routinely made hardware sing in a way even the people who designed it found amazing. It was this technical competence on which Remedy was built.

In 1995, a group of friends with a strong interest in games decided to take the leap into professional game development. They were young, skilled, passionate, and ambitious—and somewhat clueless about how game development or business in general worked. It was the classic "garage band" start-up situation; the first Remedy office was in one founding member's parents' basement.

The first game Remedy made was Death Rally, a fast-paced action racing game viewed from a top-down perspective. For that, we built a high-performance 3D engine that featured texture mapping and lighting effects that, at the time, were cutting edge. Long days went into making the game—we were learning not only how to make a game, but also how to work together as a game studio.

On September 6, 1996, Death Rally was released by Apogee Software and GT Interactive.

Made by a dozen people, it sold over 90,000 copies—which, by the standards of 1996, was a hit. It wasn't a complex game, but it was technically impressive and had that elusive "fun factor"—it was one of those games you just couldn't put down.

For Remedy, it was time to consider the future. Ideas were flowing around, and among them was the concept of a "3rd person action game." At the time, it was called Dark Justice. Once they saw a prototype of that game, along with a design document, 3D Realms was on board. Early in 1997, development work on the title began. Eventually, it would come to be known as Max Payne.

It was at this point that Remedy really transitioned from the garage band into an actual game development team. Death Rally was essentially made with no money and no resources beyond what individual team members could scrape together, using their own computers.

Now there was an actual budget—a limited one, but a budget nonetheless. Although, Max Payne was made on the cheap, it was created by people who could work on it full-time—people with talent and ambition, and the kind of creativity that helps overcome budget limitations.

The story of the New York cop whose undercover assignment goes to hell when he's framed for murder and both NYPD and the mob was pure film noir, told with a certain tongue-in-cheek self-awareness—in the world of Max Payne, everything was cranked up to eleven. This was true for the technology as much as for the story: just like with Death Rally, we created a custom game engine; called MAX-FX, it was designed to take full advantage of 3D acceleration. At the time, that was not a standard feature in home computers, but we wanted the game to harness the power of latest hardware.

We knew our technology would enable us to make New York feel real, but it would take more than technical solutions—we also needed a touch of verisimilitude we could only get at the source. A research trip to New York resulted in a wide array of reference materials that ensured our textures and style would capture that Big Apple vibe vital to the project. The team visited subway stations and tunnels, crackhouses and skyscrapers, photographing everything.

For all the work that was going into the visuals, it was obvious that the budget for Max Payne wouldn't stretch to full-blown cinematics. For a game with a heavy emphasis on its story/telling, this was an obvious problem. But the vast amount of photographic reference material provided a solution: utilizing them in a graphic novel format, we could use sequential storytelling to great dramatic effect. From that, it wasn't a great stylistic leap to conclude that the character art should also be based on photographs.

As a result, the game was populated by ourselves, as well as whomever we thought had a great presence that fit the story. Famously, the writer of the game, Sam Lake, became Max Payne. His mother took on the part of Nicole Horne, the game's main villain. One of the mob bosses was played by the janitor of Sam's apartment building. They were only needed for still photographs, so no actual acting experience was required.

During the production of Max Payne, Remedy almost doubled in size, growing from a dozen people to 20. Even so, the game was made by a tiny team working on a tight budget, and it wasn't until 2001 that Max Payne was finally released. It was worth the wait for the team and the audience alike. The fugitive New York cop caught between the cops and the mob struck an instant chord with gamers. The use of slow-motion "bullet time" that made every combat encounter a cinematic experience, the stylish and technically impressive visuals, and the exaggeratedly dramatic film noir story that made the narrative a part of the core gameplay experience netted great reviews—and sales. Max Payne was one of the best-selling PC games of 2001, and it later achieved "Greatest Hits" status on the PlayStation® 2 computer entertainment system and "Platinum Hits" recognition on Microsoft's Xbox® video game system.

Remedy Retrospective

Alan Wake and American Nightmare

After a period of conceptualizing and brainstorming, we finally settled on our next game: Alan Wake, presented as a “psychological action thriller,” a notable departure from the noir stylings of Max Payne. It was the story of Alan Wake, a writer exhausted by a reckless lifestyle, a troubled marriage, and an impenetrable writer’s block. Wake ends up in the small Washington town of Bright Falls in an effort to recharge his batteries—but when his wife disappears, a strange dark presence starts to take control of everything, and Wake starts to find pages of a novel he doesn’t remember writing, but which seem to be coming true before his eyes, things quickly go from bad to worse, and he no longer knows what’s real.

Alan Wake was released on May 14, 2010 for the Xbox 360, and later for the PC. It featured Remedy’s trademark intense combat, this time making the character’s flashlight as important a weapon as the gun he carried, but the entire experience was presented as a six-episode TV show with an atmosphere strongly influenced by Twin Peaks and Stephen King novels.

Alan Wake also represented another technological leap for Remedy: the greatly improved game engine brought the dark and vast Washington woods to life, recreated for the game with the help of tens of thousands of reference photos taken on site in the Pacific Northwest area. A great deal of work went into the engine’s extensive lighting features, which were required to fully present the game’s themes of light and darkness as intended. It was also a game that reflected Remedy’s growing storytelling ambitions: full of mystery, atmosphere, and character, it soon gained a cult following.

During Alan Wake’s development, the team size grew considerably. At the peak of development, Remedy boasted around 50 employees. For Alan Wake, we also created two DLC episodes, The Signal and The Writer.

At this point, the question of next steps was again upon us. A sequel to Alan Wake was the obvious choice, and plans for that had already been underway for some time. However, the business environment for games was undergoing changes.

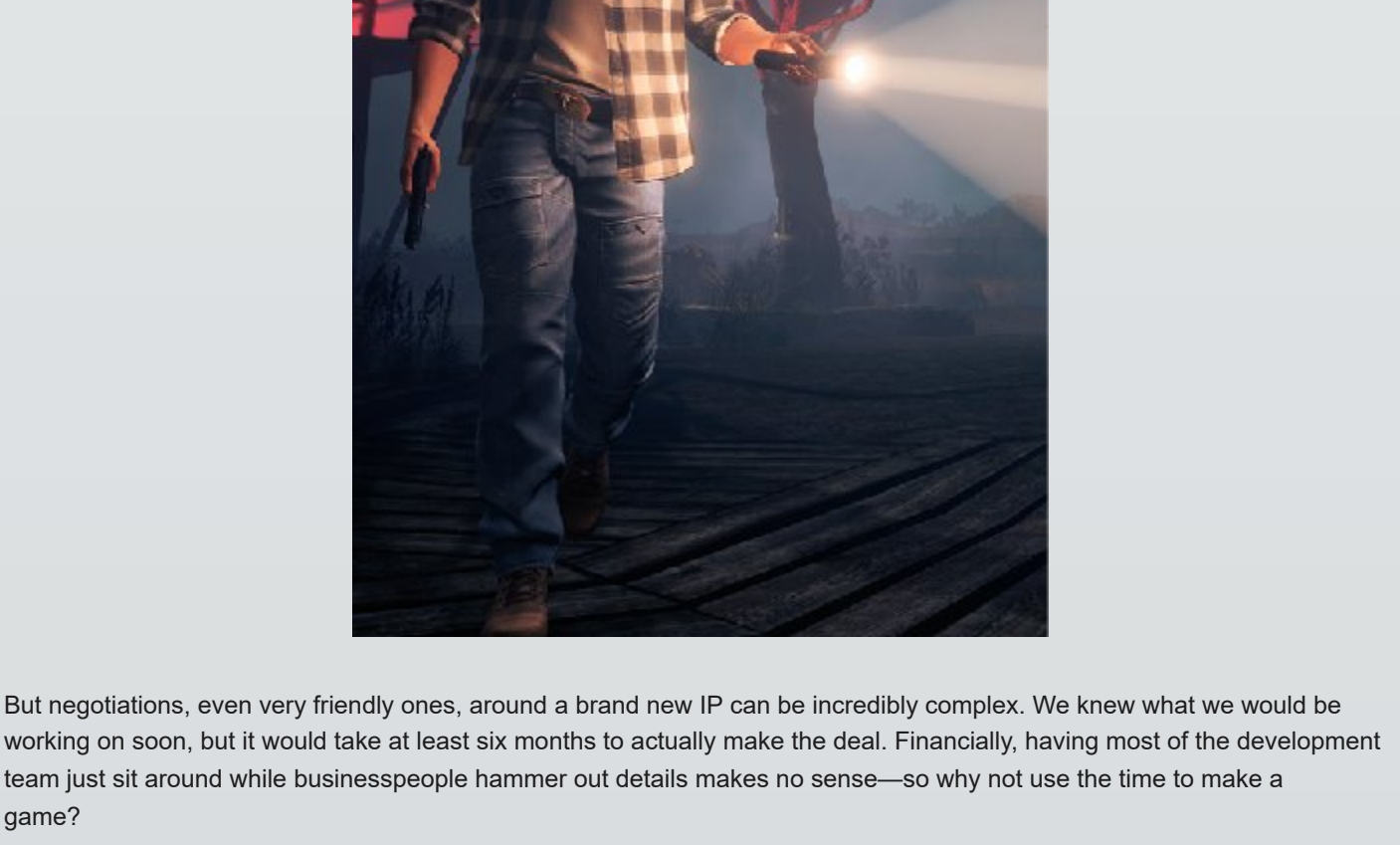
Publishers were increasingly cautious—technological advancements allowed for much greater production quality in games, but that was directly reflected in development costs.

It became obvious that while a sequel could happen, counting on it would be foolish—at this stage, Remedy had around 50 employees, and a period of extended searching would have been financially risky. It was in these circumstances that Quantum Break had its origins—there are always other ideas, and we started pitching some of them to publishers. It soon became clear that Quantum Break had legs, as Microsoft recognized its potential—they were looking for an impressive title with a strong storytelling element. We had touched a chord.

But negotiations, even very friendly ones, around a brand new IP can be incredibly complex. We knew what we would be working on soon, but it would take at least six months to actually make the deal. Financially, having most of the development team just sit around while businesspeople hammer out details makes no sense—so why not use the time to make a game?

The end result was Alan Wake’s American Nightmare. Developed in just eight months, it was based on “Night Springs,” a fictional TV show in the Alan Wake universe paying homage to Rod Serling’s Twilight Zone. It features Wake trapped in a strange time loop by his evil doppelgänger, Mr. Scratch. While it was a smaller standalone game, it was a chance for Remedy to improve on Alan Wake’s combat gameplay by introducing a wide variety of new enemy types. Notably, it was also an opportunity to experiment on a much smaller scale with several concepts that would become Quantum Break’s key features —combining gameplay sequences with live-action video, and loops in time.

Alan Wake’s American Nightmare was released digitally on the Xbox LIVE Arcade on February 22, 2012. By the time it came out, Remedy was already hard at work on the pre-production of Quantum Break—our most ambitious and challenging project yet by any standard.



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Game Development

Before Quantum

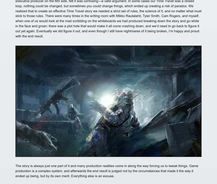
After Atari Wake, we had a plan to create a sequel to it. We worked on the concept and pitched it to several potential partners, including Microsoft Studios, to whom we showed it at the first game. At the time they were looking for something else, and I don't think they were ready for the kind of game we were making. Also, there was an element of interactive narrative in it, so the guys from the press room to afford the story of the game in some way.

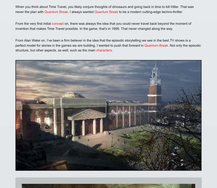
We returned back home to Poland from Redmond. The idea of pushing our storytelling more into interactive direction fell exciting. First, I had to thank to Wes Alan Wake, in a draft like concept that we had been planning for Alan Wake 2. It was a kind of game that we had been planning for Alan Wake 2. It was a kind of game that we had been planning for Alan Wake 2. I started to feel that it would be better to create a totally new IP for this multiple missions. First of all, however, I wanted the Alan Wake franchise to remain true to itself, and not to be molded to some another purpose. I also felt that we could come up with a new concept that would better suit what we were talking about.

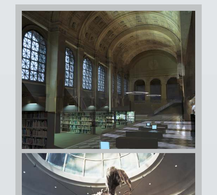
In the meantime, we had other partners who were interested in creating a sequel to Alan Wake with us, but none of them was willing to commit to anything at that time. So, we decided to continue working on the concept of Alan Wake 2 and to explore Alan Wake before its time being a hit and making a new IP.

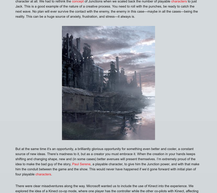
There are always multiple, exciting ideas and concepts floating around at Remedy, to something that's hard to around in a creative environment. I had one concept—with a working title of Quantum—that dealt with parallel realities and Time Travel. This concept had been inspired by what's also in Alan Wake. At one point there had been a draft of a scenario that was inspired by many science fiction theory of quantum physics. The scenario included a parallel universe, outside the town of Bright Falls, and Wake's writings briefly seemed to be echoes of events taking place in a parallel reality. That was left out of Alan Wake's final version, but I still liked the idea. I also liked the idea of a time travel theme, written by my esteemed colleague Mikko Rautalahti (like all the Night Springs episodes were).

In the final version of Alan Wake, you can find a TV that features the episodic element "The Quantum Suicide," and down the line it made me think about a new concept that was Quantum.









More and more to me, the ambition is, and has been to make all the numerous components that make a AAA.

game to talk to and more each other, to be more than just a collection of parts. I'm sure all the guys, very much wanted to find a theme and subtle story genre to go with the concept of interactive narrative, per that led me to Quantum, but the parallel reality part of it, but rather the rest of Time Travel. In a classic Time Travel story, something goes wrong and the hero wishes he could go back and fix it, change the past to save the future. We created a pitch presentation out of the theme's a longer. If you could go back in time, what would you change? We pitched it to Microsoft and that was it. Nada.

Making a AAA game, creating a new game IP, is a prototype project, which means that ideas must be tested and proven before you can commit to them. That's a huge endeavor.

It takes many years of work (in Bizarre, hundreds of people, and tens of millions of dollars of money to make. No one will give you that money on only a word of mouth. You must prove your team is built to make it work.

Looking back at the initial concept documents of Quantum Break, I feel that in its heart and soul the final experience still exists in a lot of the early thinking and theories, but many things got changed and shifted around along the way.

In the initial concept, the grand plan included three layers of Time Travel, which given to show that in the concept level the symmetry that feels attractive might not work so well once you dig into it.

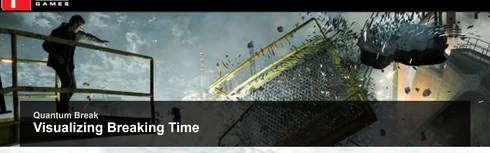
There was the second-to-second gameplay. The initial concept, the thing we set out to prototype first, was the idea that the player can rewind time, and then have another version of himself replaying the things he did on his side while he's free to do something else. Then, he can rewind time again, and have two versions of himself, and so on. That was the core of the early idea. We had the tech for this up and running. But it's not a gameplay loop that was a lot repetitive and very shallow, oriented. It wasn't what we were looking for; we wanted the action to feel fast-paced and aggressive. Along the way, the core gameplay concept evolved into something more dynamic. Pushing the player character and the world we had what we were after. In the early principles document we created together with Chris Vonck from Microsoft Studios, we had the slogan "Time Manipulation as a Weapon." That's the core of the gameplay, and that's what became the main mechanic of the game.

The second layer of Time Travel was the interactive narrative, per the problems in time. Originally, Jukkonen happened in the past, and the Time Travel aspect explored the past and the future. Jukkonen would travel back in time, and a decision in time would happen. Then, returning back to the present, there would be consequences. Single would have changed depending on the decisions you made, and you have an option to go back and choose differently. Every can, we didn't have clear idea of what was possible to achieve with Time Travel and what was not.

The third layer of Time Travel was the story layer. We had a lot more Time Travel in the story early on. David Hosiaas, our first writer, had written a story that was full of Time Travel, and it was very complex. It was fun, but it was also very confusing. It was nothing overall we changed, but sometimes you could change things, which ended up creating a lot of problems. We realized that to create an effective Time Travel story we needed a strict set of rules, the science of it, and no matter what road we took, we had to stick to those rules. We also had to make sure that the player knew what the rules were. We had to make sure that one of us would look at the rule explaining the rules of the universe. The story was written by a few different writers along the way. Josh Corbin came in at the end and performed miracles on the screenplay, rewriting and editing it to its final shape.

My ambition was always to make Quantum Break the Remedy game version of a Hollywood summer blockbuster sci-fi action spectacle. Only time (ha!) will tell whether or not we succeeded.

The line from a poem by Dolmon Shaarisi we used in the early marketing materials perfectly captures the essence of Quantum Break. Both as an experience, as well as our journey getting there: "Time is the fire in which we burn."



Quantum Break
Visualizing Breaking Time

In Quantum Break, a failed Time Travel experiment causes a growing Fracture in time, causing time to start breaking down, leading toward the End of Time. During the same experiment, both the hero and the villain of the story, Jack Joyce and Paul Serene, are both caught in a blast of Chronon energy, gaining a number of different time-related superpowers.

All the different elements related to this, time breaking down and with that the Stutters in time, the Time Powers, the Junction moments where Paul Serene can see glimpses of different potential futures, the energies and effects related to the technology involving Time Machines and other experimental devices of Chronon technology, the Chronon Syndrome Serene suffers from, even the elusive Shifters, all had to feel and be a part of the same family of effects.

What does time look like? How do you visualize the concept of time breaking down? We knew we wanted the normal time and broken time to feel like two different worlds.

But it took a lot of brainstorming and prototyping, a lot of hard core tech and engine work to get there. We started from simple ideas, things move when time works normally; everything freezes when time stops. Simple enough. But it didn't really offer us much to work with and it got a bit boring after a while. We wanted more—more danger, more visual fireworks. How to make the broken time feel fragmented, stretched, unstable? We looked for visual inspiration from Cubism. We looked into Glitch art, slit-scans, long exposure photos, strobe photography. Bit by bit, we created a palette of different effects and techniques, one simulation essentially with these different elements that by tweaking them in different ways we could create our family of Time Powers and effects.

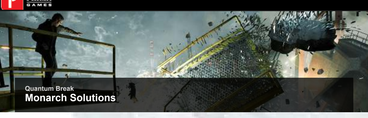
What follows is a step-by-step guide to visual changes caused by time breaking down. It's worth noting that many of these effects are effects in motion and, as such, while you can get an idea from still images, they will never truly do justice to how it feels and looks in the game.

When time breaks and a Stutter hits, the overall ambiance and grading of the scene changes. For this we took inspiration from infrared photography and created an overexposed and intense look.

We wanted to create a feeling of dangerous energies, and unpredictable, unstable look to broken time. Distortion waves sweep through the environment, animated by simple 2D fluid simulation projected over the scene. The intensity of distortion is driven by audio to make it feel more authentic. Indeed, audio plays a huge role in this process. Waves create complex layering of effects. In addition to geometry changes, waves emit distortion prisms, causing additional prismatic screen-space distortions and flakes—small particles taking their color from the underlying surface. Finally, waves project caustics over the scene, providing another layer of movement.

This is done by taking the 2D fluid simulation texture, distorting it with prismatic shapes, and projecting it as a light source over the scene. Light's intensity is modulated by audio.

Inside Stutters, motion trails, inspired by slit-scan and long exposure photography, provide a visualization of an object's movement through space and time. The sky and the stars are a good example of how trails are used. When a Stutter hits, the visualization of the sky changes completely. Stars and other objects in the sky draw out paths of light. Other important sources of light trails include bullets and the warp trails of Monarch Chronon tech Strikers, using the Chronon tech devices on their backs to simulate the effects of Jack's Time Rush power.



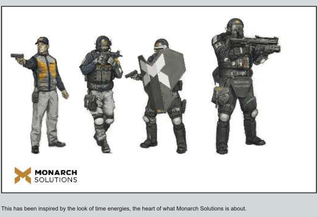
Quantum Break
Monarch Solutions

Monarch Solutions, the corporation Paul Serene founded when he traveled back in time to 1999 to prepare for the End of Time, plays a huge role in Quantum Break. In the game, it's your enemy; in the show, it's the focus. We set out to create a corporation that would feel like a huge, real, authentic entity on all different levels.

We hired Nimö, an agency that builds brands for companies, to help us conceptualize the branding for Monarch Solutions. Together we created a brand guide with rules just as company brands have in the real world.

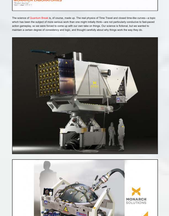
The Monarch brand appears all around in both the game and the show. The core of the Monarch identity is the brand mark: a stylized butterfly symbol. This appears in every application connected to Monarch. The idea is naturally tied to the concept of Time Travel. Paul Serene's power to shape the future with his Junction power, and the butterfly effect.

Shard-like shapes and the color yellow are strongly present in the company brand. Monarch architecture is Fractured and angular, creating a look of prismatic futurism.

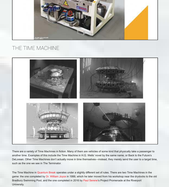


This has been inspired by the look of time energies, the heart of what Monarch Solutions is about.

MONARCH LABORATORIES



The science of Quantum Break is, of course, made up. The real physics of Time Travel and closed time-like curves—a topic that has fascinated the subject of time travel for decades—is far too complex to be explained in a video game. Instead, we used Einstein's work as a jumping off point, and thought carefully about why things work the way they do.



THE TIME MACHINE

There are a variety of Time Machines in Seton. Many of them are vehicles of some kind (full physical ones, or projected) or another form. Examples of this include the Time Machines in D.I.D. Walls' room by the cartel ruins, or Beats in the Future's Past. Others, however, are not. The Time Machine in the Monarch Labs is the building that makes the main set piece for the level in the first act of the game.

The Time Machine in Quantum Break operates under a slightly different set of rules. There are few Time Machines in the game, the one exception to this is Jeffrey Lacroix's Lab, which has been moved from the workshop near the skylights to the old Time Machine room. Jeffrey's Lab is a mirror of the Time Machine room, but it's been modified to suit his needs at the University.

Although the cable was built as a fully operational, built-of-them-scanned-based on the same principle, this Time Machine is now considered a spinning object here. Most its augh of chaotic to changed, movement in space-no-events (re-located to time-travel) and the

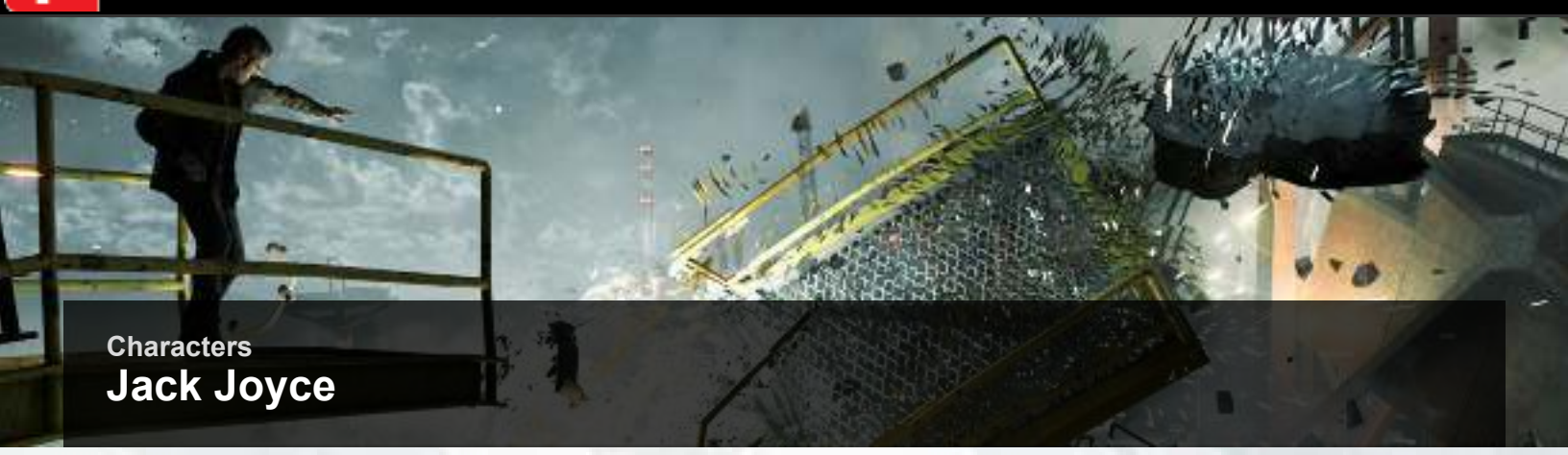
Characters

Creating Digital Doubles

When it comes to human faces, everyone´s an expert. We´re conditioned since birth to detect both verbal and non-verbal facial cues and make judgements based those cues. Studies have shown a breakdown in communication and a negative bias towards those suffering from facial paralysis despite the best intentions of the afflicted. Thus the idea of a computer generated “digital double” passing for a real person presents a tremendous challenge not only technically but also psychologically.

Against the odds—much like our protagonist Jack Joyce—we set out to re-create convincing performances so that the player could empathize with our characters. With an array of DSLR cameras we captured their complexion, their pore details, their crow’s feet, their scars, the color of their irises, even a cast of their teeth was made to get that authentic smile. We captured ranges of motion for both their face and their body in all imaginable poses, with them in their underwear and fully clothed. We were then able to reconstruct extremely accurate models and texture maps from all the images we had amassed. We built a repeatable process and became proficient at it.

Our key finding was that instead to trying to decompose the human condition into a canon of standardized shapes and their linear activations, realism was better served by capturing their actual facial performance. This was done using a DI4D system, famous for its use in neuroscientific studies at the University of Glasgow. The system combined nice cameras at up to 60 frames per second near high definition resolution. We had a team of four people working full time “tracking” the resulting data, all five hours and 120 terabytes of it, using the face model we had constructed. We then augmented the data with wrinkle activation trained against the range of their facial motion.



Characters

Jack Joyce

In many ways, Jack Joyce is a man without roots, a drifter. Orphaned at a long age, raised by a brother he doesn't really get along with. He's had brushes with the law; when he was younger, he and his best friend Paul would get into trouble on a regular basis. Jack was never a troublemaker, per se; he was just somebody who had a knack for getting in trouble—and for getting out of it, one way or another. Jack's always known how to take care of himself.

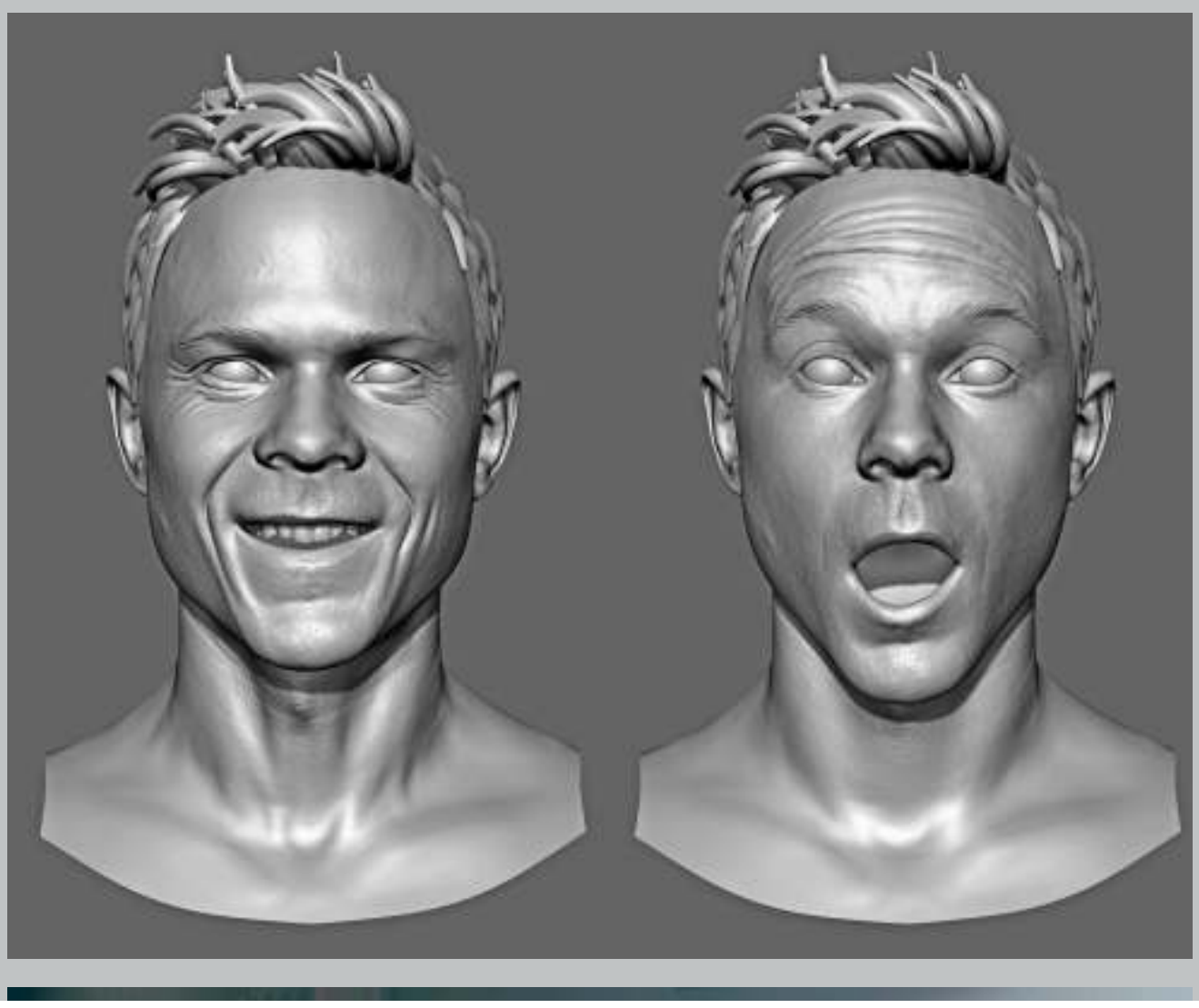
But not just himself. Jack's never really been the selfish type. Drifter or not, for Jack, loyalty runs deep—deep enough for him to drop everything and fly across the world to help a friend. There was never any question whether Jack would help Paul. The kind of bond they had was sacred to him.

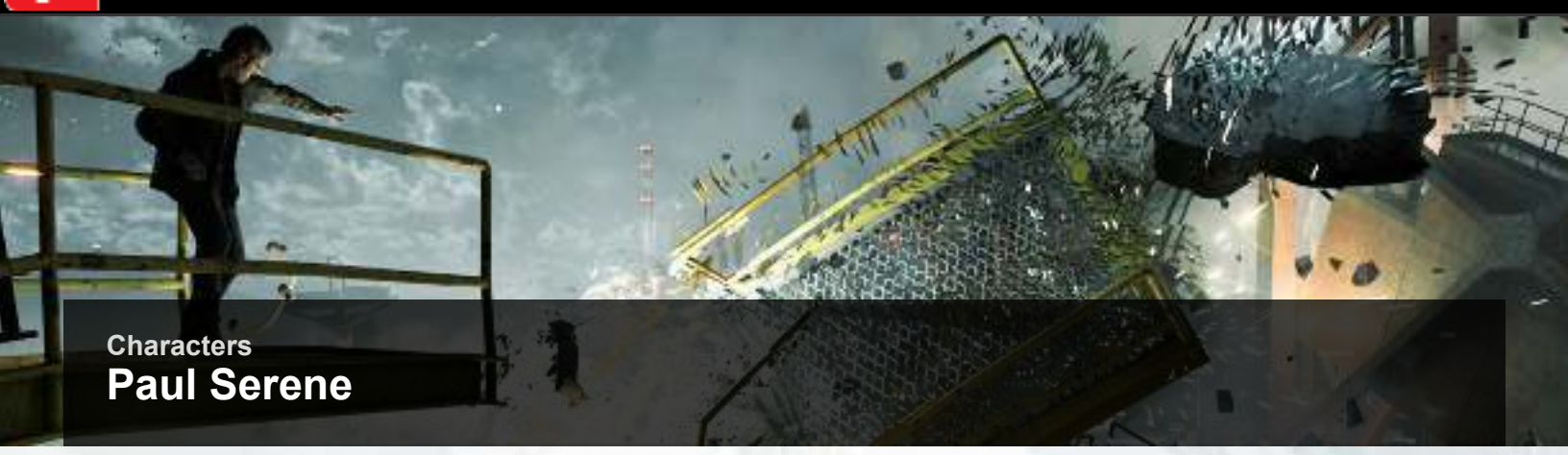
In the end, for all the friction between Jack and his brother, the same goes for William, too. William may have been more than Jack could handle when he left, but Jack loves his brother, bad blood or no.

Where Paul has been driven and made a real career for himself, Jack's been doing a little bit of this, a little bit of that, whatever made ends meet. There's always work for somebody who can think on his feet and is willing to take a few risks, and perhaps isn't that particular about whether something's legal, strictly speaking. So Jack's been around; he's put in shifts as a bouncer in a shady Bangkok nightclub and run the occasional errand for the kind of people who pay you in cash and tell you to keep your mouth shut. On more than one occasion, he's found himself in the kind of trouble you can't talk your way out of.

Rules have always been more like suggestions for him—if things had played out a little differently, he might have made a fine career criminal. But Jack knows the difference between right and wrong. What's more, it matters to him. So when his best friend suggests doing something kind of illegal in the middle of the night, he doesn't really need a lot of prompting —but when things go bad, he feels a personal responsibility to set things right.

Jack is portrayed by Shawn Ashmore.





Characters

Paul Serene

There are essentially two Paul Serenes in Quantum Break.

There's the young Paul, Jack's friend, the enthusiastic, ambitious businessman who sees unprecedented fame and success on the horizon—and a chance to improve the world. Cocky, brash, talented, somewhat idealistic and very, very hungry to leave his mark, Paul is the kind of person any start-up would love to have as its founder. Paul considers himself to be a good person, and Jack—not a bad judge of character—would wholeheartedly agree.

Paul is not a scientist, he's a businessman—and a very good one, but one, in the end, driven more by ambition than caution. When faced with William's warnings, he sees it as one unstable man's word against his entire staff's —and if that isn't enough to tip the scales, the fear of humiliating failure certainly helps. For Paul, Project Promenade is everything, the thing that will turn him from a successful hi-tech entrepreneur to a household name, a Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, or Elon Musk.

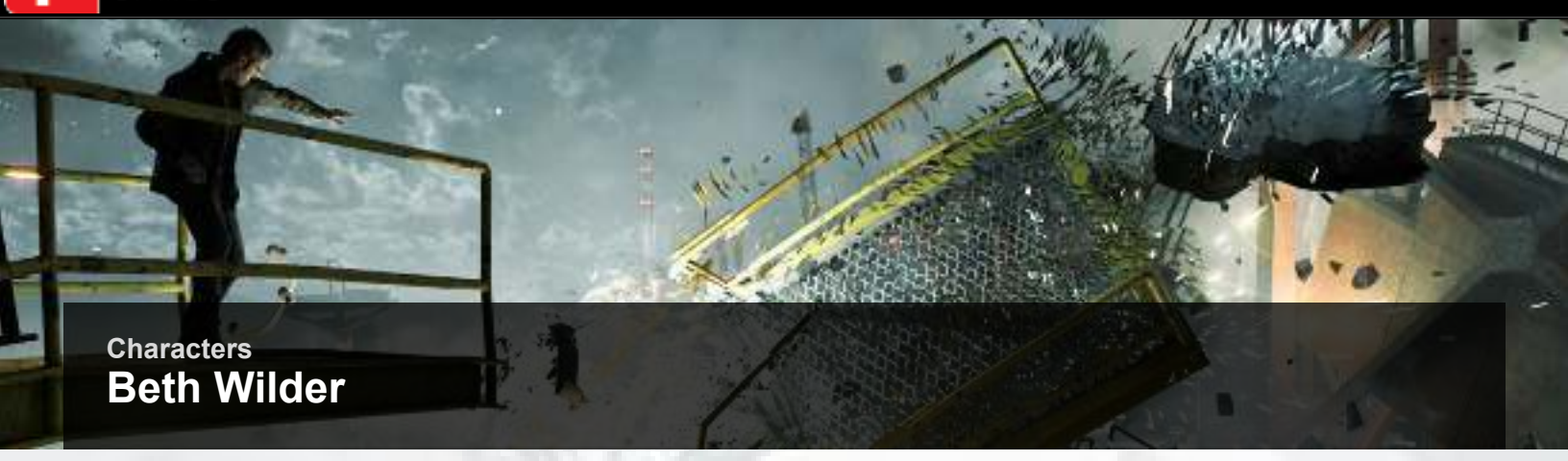
And then there's the older Serene, the one who travels to the End of Time and is forever changed by what he sees—the one who then returns to 1999, and is determined to find a way to keep humanity going even after time ends, no matter the cost. Powerful, driven, and utterly ruthless. Serene takes no pleasure in the things he has to do, but in his mind, the world is already a graveyard. Most people will be caught in the End of Time. With the stakes as high as they are, no sacrifice is too great. If people get caught in the crossfire, if he has to make hard decisions that lead to the deaths of innocents, Serene will not hesitate.

More than anything else, Serene is driven by the conviction that nothing can change. He has tried over and over again, tested and finally accepted that things will go the way things will go, and he can't change the tiniest detail. Every single decision he makes is already a part of the pattern that leads, indirectly or directly, to the fateful events at Project Promenade. His visions of the future, though useful, all point to the inevitability of all things, and even the power to choose his future only lets him fill in the blanks, not truly change the fate of mankind.

Despite all this, despite the Chronon Syndrome that consumes him and makes his life agony, ultimately Serene's philosophy is one of hope: he believes that even though he can't keep time from ending, he can find a way to survive the apocalypse, and, with enough resources and dedication, perhaps even restart time.

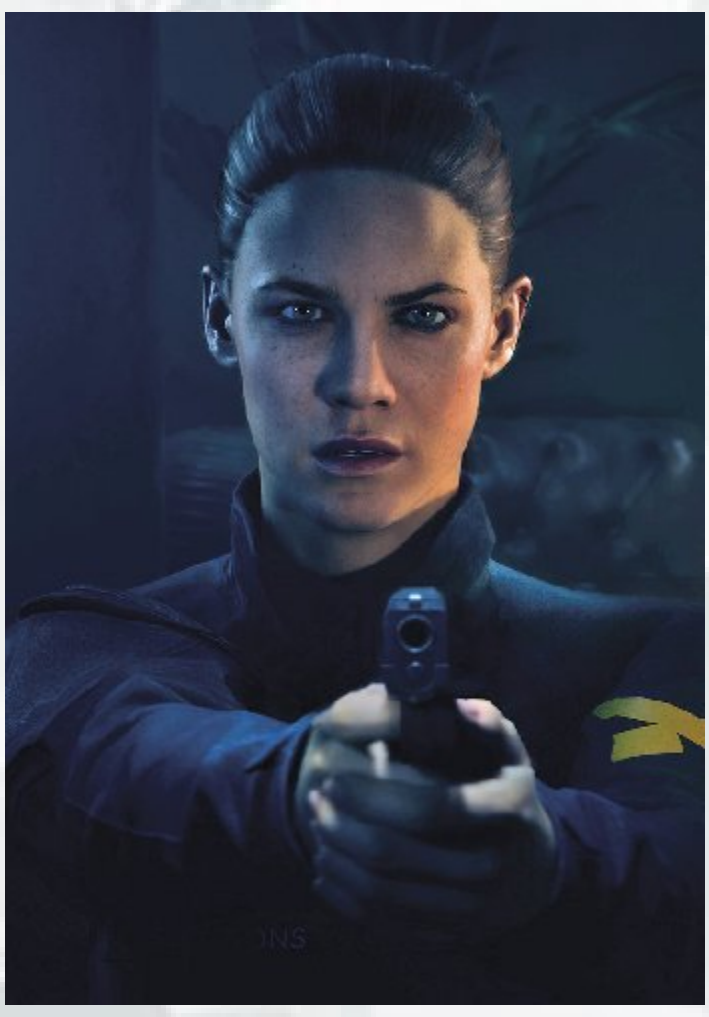
For Jack, the appearance of the older Serene is a sudden, shocking event—his friend seems to have suddenly changed to a monster. But for Serene, Jack is a memory—somebody he knew 17 years ago. There's a part of Serene that treasures that memory, but he's dedicated his entire life to his mission. He has no use for sentimentality.

Serene is portrayed by Aidan Gillen.



Characters

Beth Wilder



When Beth was nine years old, she met a strange woman with a familiar face. She said she came from the future—she was, in fact, Beth Wilder herself. She told the young Beth that her life had a purpose, that she had a mission—a destiny. She would have to train for it. She would have to make sacrifices. But she had a purpose. She gave her a notebook full of proof—events that would come to pass.

It was a brief encounter, but it changed Beth's entire life. Her roadmap to the future was full of blank spots and mysteries, but there were names and dates, descriptions of events. Enough to get here where she needed to be. She knew that the Fracture was coming, and that she would be instrumental in stopping it. She knew she would meet Jack Joyce. She knew that one day, she would travel in time, and meet a nine-year old girl, and give her a notebook.

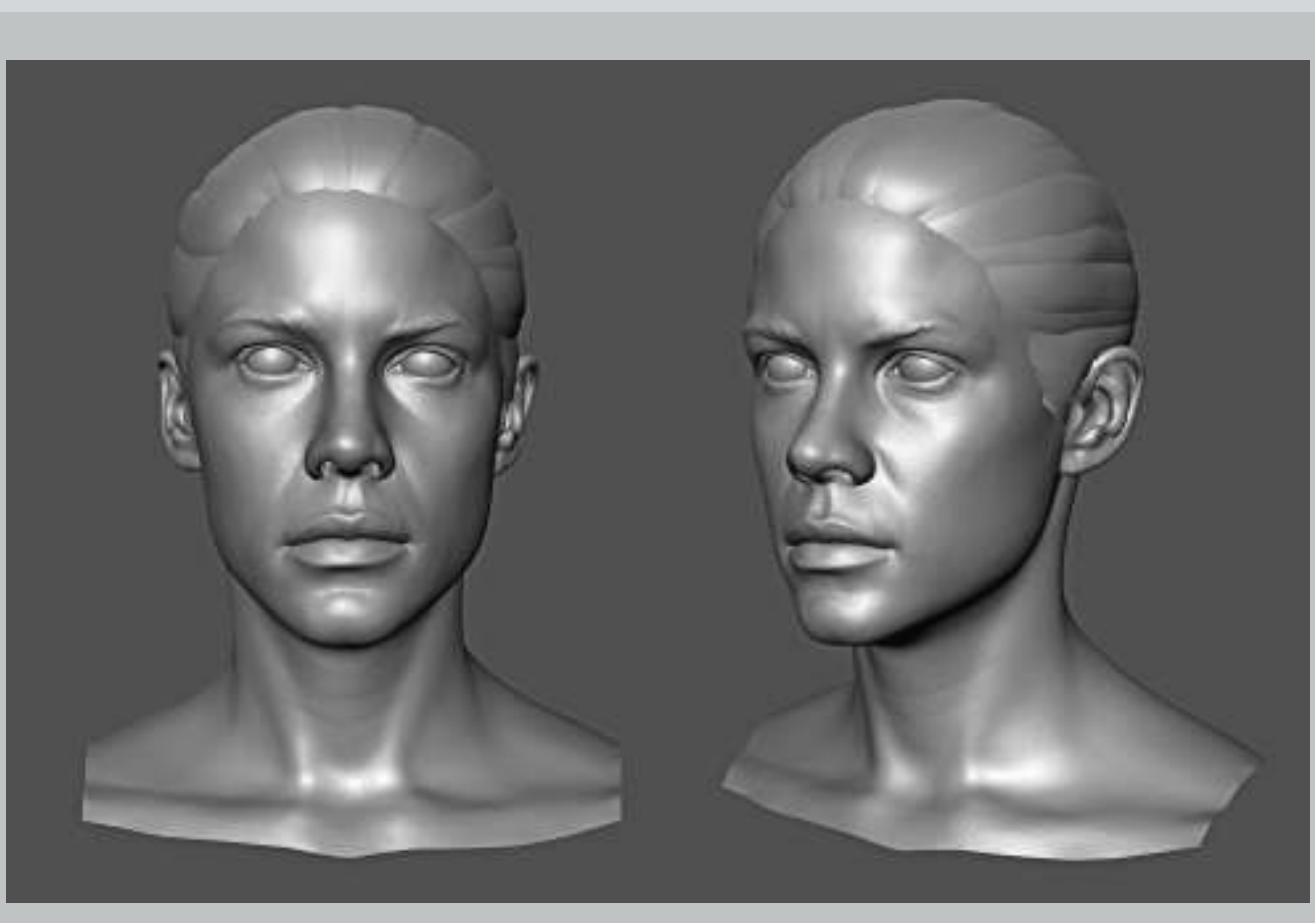
Beth is strong, bright and extremely driven; from a very young age, she's had a sense of purpose most people can't even imagine. She had been given an impossible task, but the person who gave it to her knew exactly what she was capable of. There's no room for self-doubt or hesitation in her.

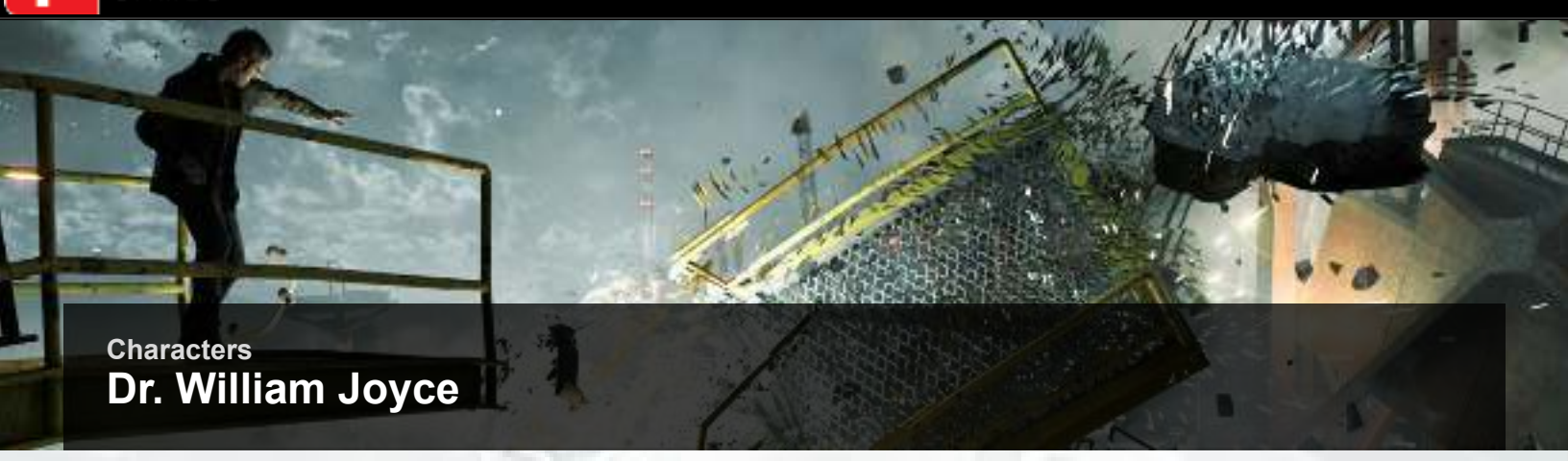
All this changes when Beth ends up at the End of Time. She believes in her own destiny and knows it cannot change. And yet, if time actually ends, then her destiny is to fail. This realization shakes her to her core, and while she's too strong to shatter, for the first time in years, she knows doubt.

Once she meets her younger self, another key element in her life changes. Up until that point, she's been fearless—secure in the knowledge that whatever happens, she will survive and be physically whole. How else could she ever meet her younger self? But once that point is passed, she becomes mortal. Before, she can stare into the barrel of a gun and know this was not the day she dies. After that event, her future is unwritten. Her immunity has been revoked.

But none of that goes in the notebook. She sets her younger self on the right path—the path of strength, dedication and achievement—and for all her fears and doubts, she knows her task hasn't changed. She sacrifices everything she has with awareness and dedication no one else could truly understand, save perhaps Paul Serene, and she does so twice—first, when she sets herself on that path, knowing what it will lead to, and again when she finally faces Serene in William Joyce's workshop on July 4, 2010.

Beth is portrayed by Courtney Hope.





Characters

Dr. William Joyce

William Joyce has a reputation as a brilliant physicist who, as a young man, was already doing groundbreaking work with his research partner, Dr. Meyer. Their discovery of the universal Chronon field that gives the universe time was big news in the physics circles. After that, it was easy for William to secure grants for further research. Everybody thought he would go on to accomplish even greater things – nobody expected it to be the moment when he peaked. But things seemed to fizzle out for him.

What nobody knew is that in secret, William created something even more revolutionary than his earlier theories: in 1999, he built the world's first Time Machine. But when he turned it on, a man from the future unexpectedly ran out of it and shot him. That experience alone would have been enough to convince him that he'd made a horrible mistake, but when the man was followed by the mysterious Beth Wilder, who told him about the Fracture and implored him to work on a solution to it, the true extent of his sins started to become clear.

He devoted the next eleven years to creating his Countermeasure. It took him years to just come up with the theoretical basis for it, and more years to painstakingly harvest the Chronon particles required for its operation. The effort drained his finances —whatever he could beg, borrow or steal, he poured into his secret project. No one could know what he was working on—not even his brother Jack, who couldn't understand William's all-consuming obsession and the financial and emotional drain it imposed on their lives.

William had never been particularly good with people—he had little patience for others, and his own mind tended to follow its own tangents.

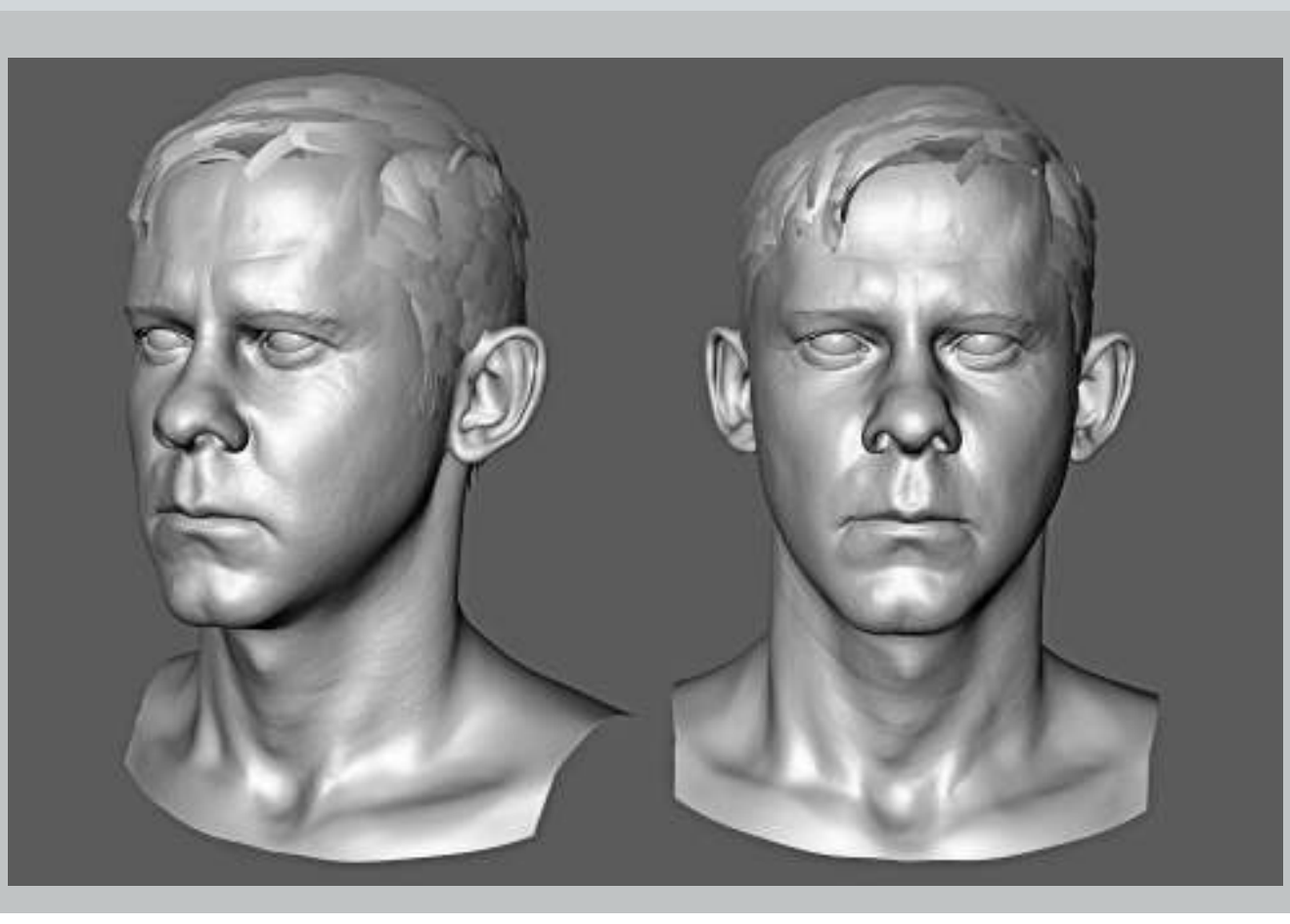
He was very, very intelligent, obviously; it wasn't that he couldn't understand how social Interaction worked. He just wasn't particularly interested in it. Jack was all the family he had, and William loved him dearly; after their parents died, William raised Jack best he could. He wasn't particularly good at it, but it wasn't for lack of love. Now he couldn't look at his brother without thinking of the dark future that loomed ahead.

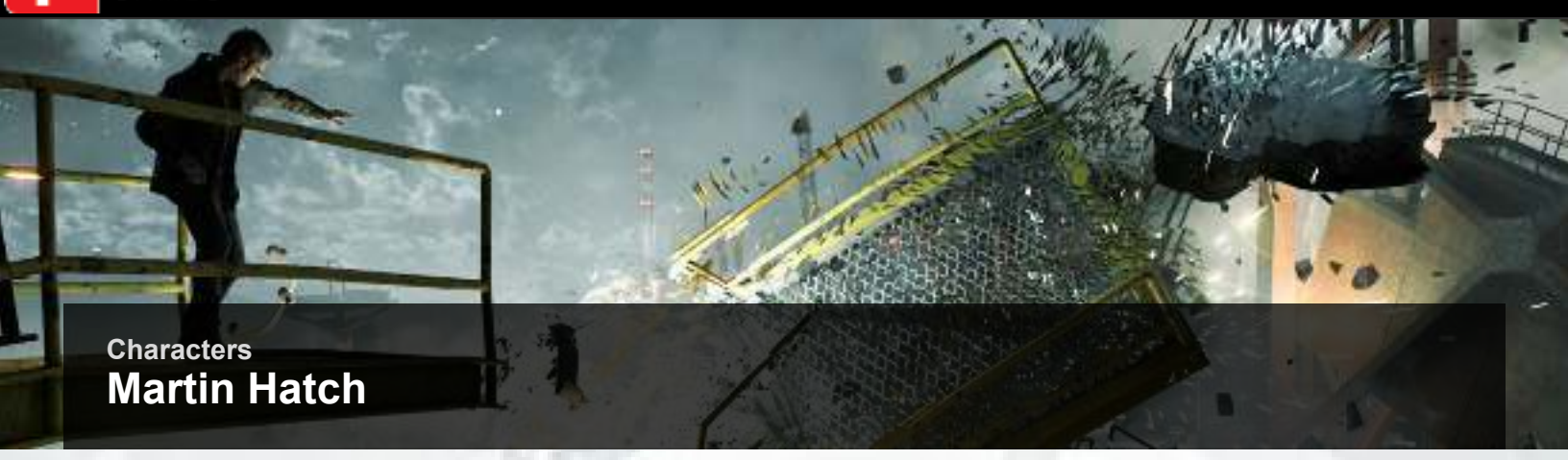
When William's Countermeasure was stolen shortly after its completion in 2010, it'd already cost him his relationship with Jack—and now he found himself without direction. Beth Wilder, who had told him what to do, had disappeared. His scientific career seemed to be mostly over. Taking a string of purely theoretical consulting jobs to make ends meet, William waited, hoping against his better knowledge that the Fracture would never occur.

And so, six years later, when another consulting job for Jack's best friend, Paul Serene, was actually revealed to be another Time Machine, clearly not only based on his own design, but also dangerously misconfigured, the old fear came back in full force: the Fracture was just around the corner. And his Countermeasure was gone. All he could hope to do was prevent the disaster from happening—even if he had to do it at gunpoint.

What William feels, more than anything else, is the crushing responsibility of knowing that it's his work that has directly led to the threat of the Fracture. He was the one who took the leap from theoretical work on the physics of time to the practicalities of building a Time Machine; he was the one whose work somehow, impossibly, enabled Paul Serene to build his own, faulty version of it. And he's the only one who really knows how to fix things.

William is portrayed by Dominic Monaghan.





Characters

Martin Hatch

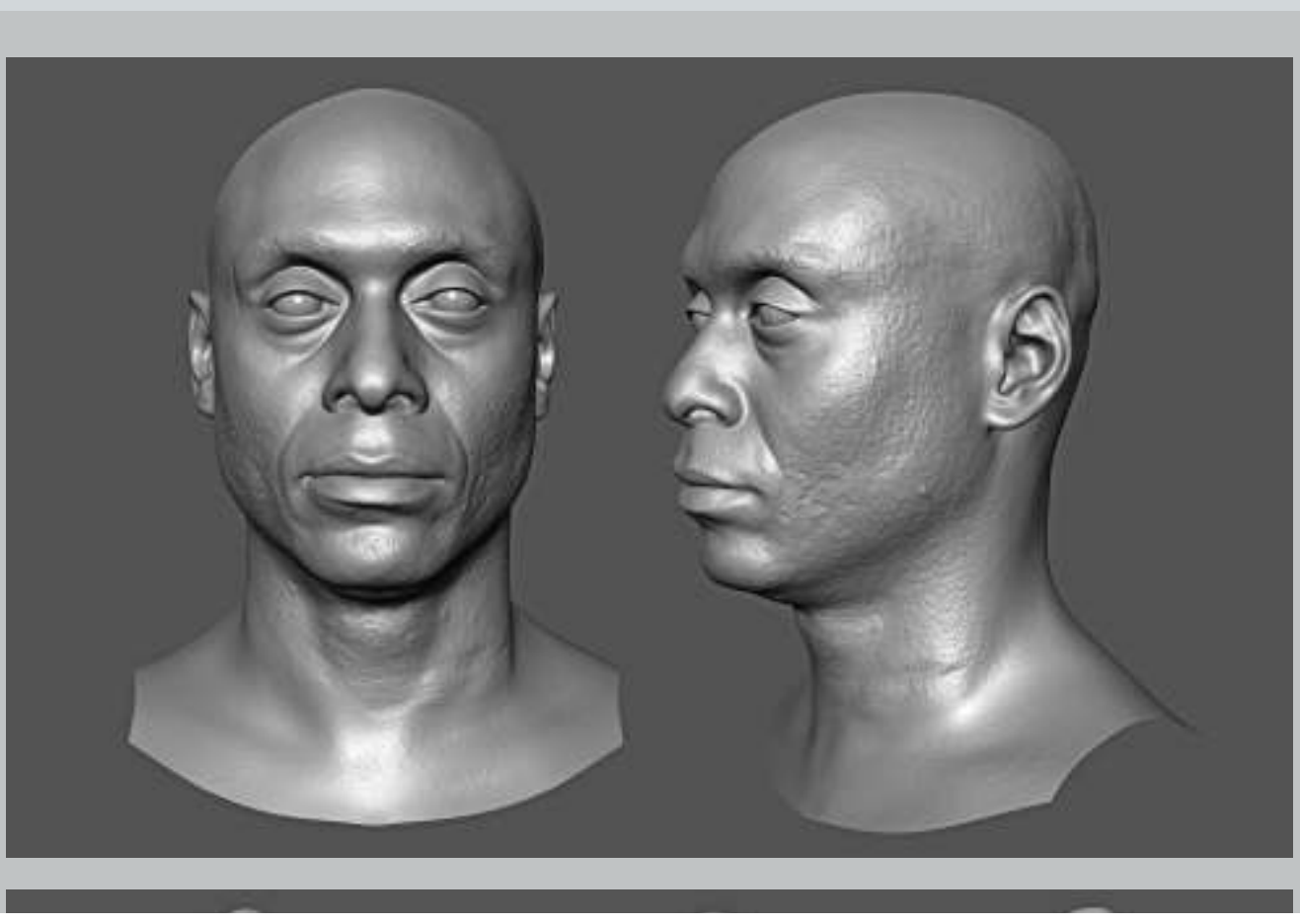
The enigmatic Martin Hatch has no past. Where he came from, nobody knows; it's as if he appeared out of thin air one day. When the time-travelling Paul Serene starts to build Monarch Solutions, he has to do so in secret—he needs a right-hand man, somebody to do what needs to be done that Serene can't. A public face for the company. Hatch seemed like the perfect candidate—intelligent, analytical, charismatic and intensely loyal. A man whose advice was always delivered with consideration and insight.

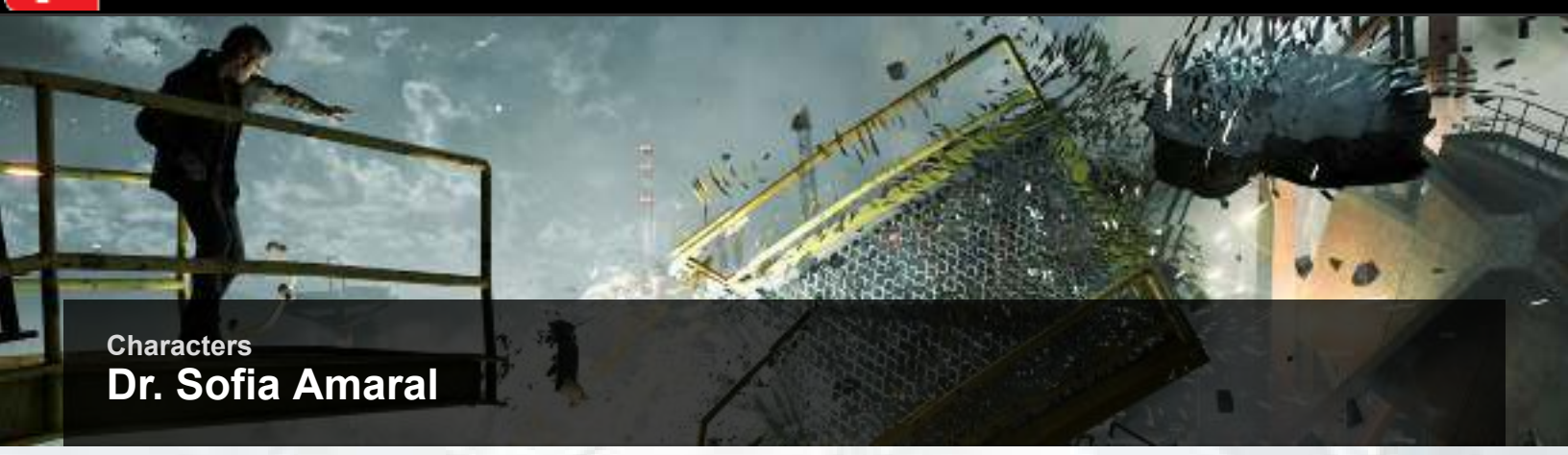
Over the years, Hatch has become very close to Serene. He's a legendary figure within Monarch Solutions—most Monarch employees aren't even aware of Serene's existence. Hatch's authority within the company is unchallenged, and the only person who can overrule him trusts him implicitly. Equally comfortable in a boardroom making billion-dollar decisions and in a dark alleyway ordering the assassination of a key target, Hatch is a man who gets things done. He's always one step ahead of everybody else.

Even ahead of Paul Serene. Unbeknownst to Serene, Hatch doesn't share his goals. Hatch knows the End of Time is coming, but where Serene sees an apocalyptic problem to be tackled, Hatch sees an opportunity. His true motives, and true nature, are closely guarded secrets even Serene knows nothing about. Hatch dances to his own rhythm, and humanity's survival simply isn't his priority. In the end, he's the one who ends up in charge of Monarch Solutions.

But for him, that's not the end game—that's just a phase in his plans.

Hatch is portrayed by Lance Reddick.





Characters

Dr. Sofia Amaral

She may not be quite as deeply immersed in quantum physics as Dr. William Joyce, but as Monarch Solutions' Head of Research, what little Dr. Sofia Amaral might lack in that specialization, she more than makes up for in her understanding of other disciplines. Paul Serene has tasked her not only with completing the Lifeboat Program and thus ensuring the survival of humanity, but also his own personal wellbeing—she is the only person alive who has a deep understanding of his Chronon Syndrome, and the only one who can prepare the treatments Serene needs to control his condition.

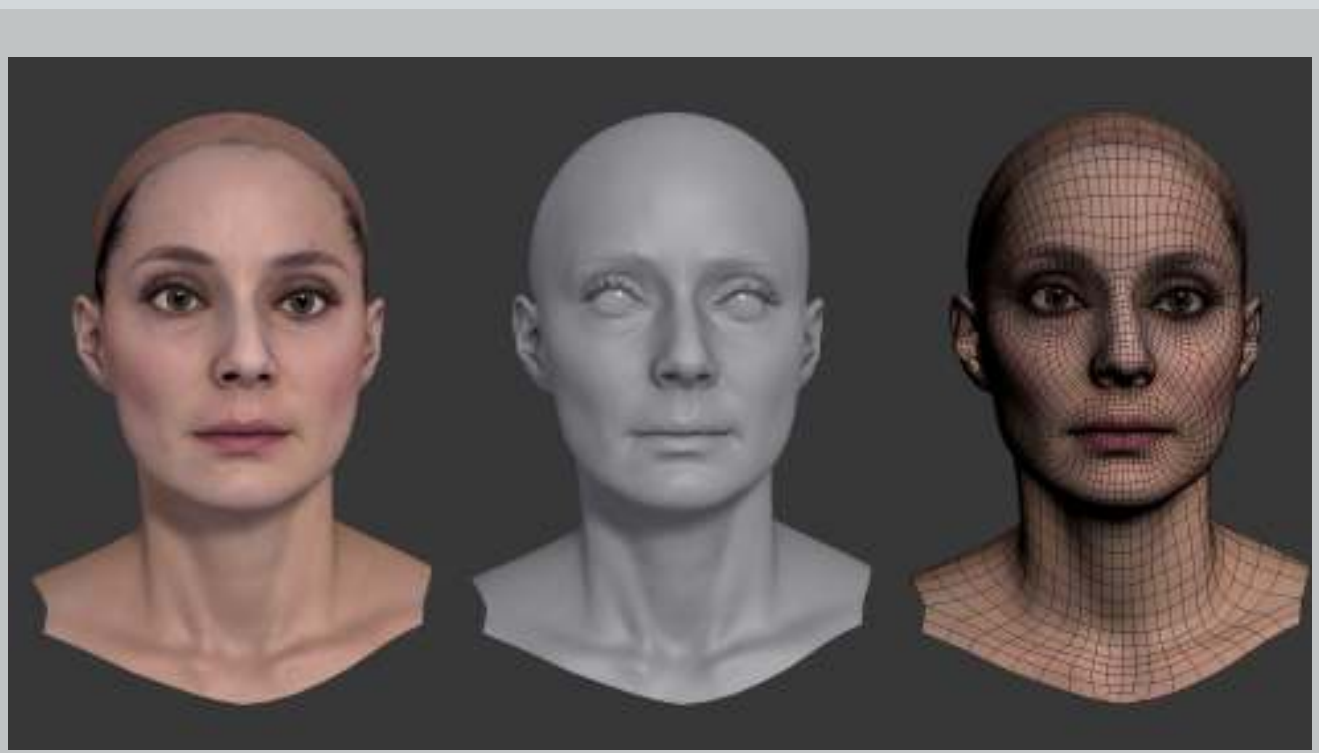
Given her position, Dr. Amaral has a great deal of resources and authority. Unfortunately, she's a scientist, not a politician, and she finds herself out of her element dealing with Monarch's upper echelons. She has concerns. Her predecessor, Dr. Henry Kim, worked very closely with Martin Hatch when Dr. Kim was deeply involved in Project Promenade at Riverport University—the project that eventually caused the Fracture. What's more, Dr. Kim turned into a Shifter under mysterious circumstances also involving Hatch.

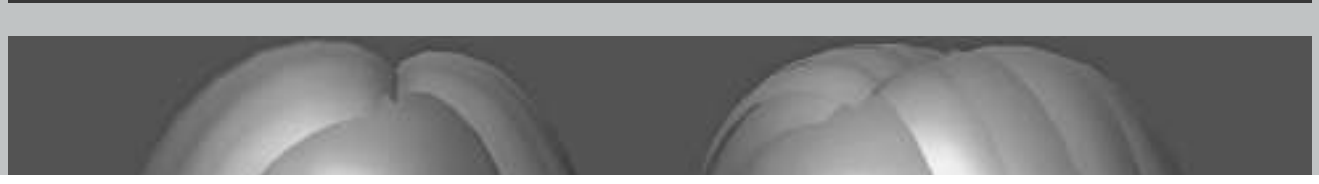
While Dr. Amaral has no proof of any wrongdoing on Hatch's part, she can see coincidences piling up, and she has unsettling suspicions that are difficult to articulate. She has a great deal of admiration and respect for Serene's dedication to his goal, which she sees as a noble one – but she can tell that for all his smooth talk, Martin Hatch doesn't fully share it. But Hatch and Serene go back a long time.

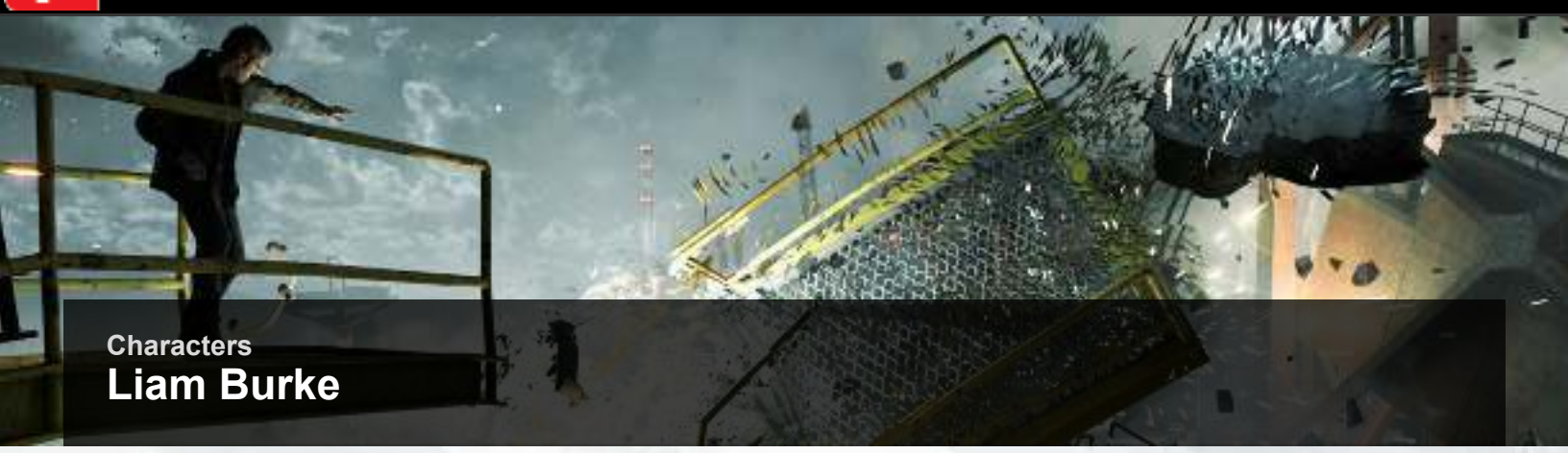
Her relationship with Serene is a complicated one—she's in a caregiver position, but she's a physicist, not a medical doctor, and she doesn't have the detachment one would perhaps expect from somebody in her situation. There's an aspect to their relationship that goes beyond professional, but it's an elusive thing—she knows that for Serene, anything that distracts him from his mission is to be avoided. And yet, at times that distraction is unavoidable.

In the end, Dr. Amaral believes in Paul Serene's vision for the future. She knows she's in a unique role to make a difference not just for Monarch Solutions, but for all of humanity.

Dr. Amaral is portrayed by Jacqueline Pinol.







Characters

Liam Burke

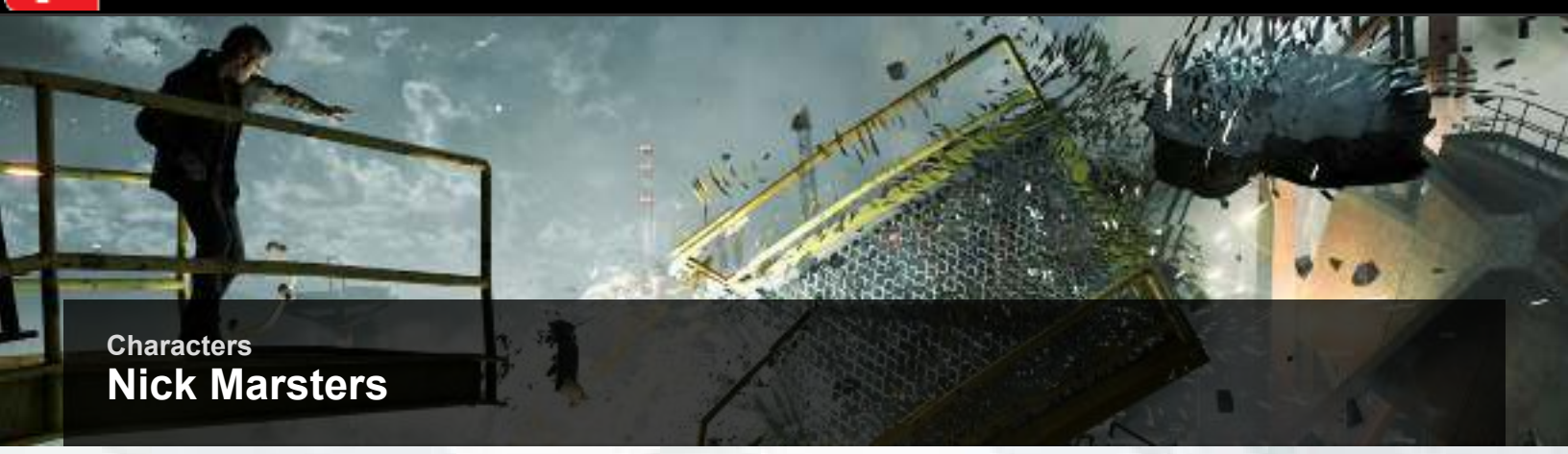
Liam is the kind of man you don't want to anyone to point at you. Exceptionally capable and coldly efficient, he'll do what's asked of him—legal, illegal, it doesn't much matter to him. He's a stone professional, and he literally knows how to get away with murder. Being employed by Monarch Solutions and often assigned to situations that require a high decree of discretion, combined with extreme action without hesitation, he's in his element when things get ugly.

Or at least he was. But there's another side to Liam. He has a wife, Emily, and they have a child on the way. They are everything to him, and they've changed him in ways he never expected—somewhere along the line, priorities shifted for him, and all of a sudden he has qualms. That in itself would not be enough to cause him to divert from course—Liam knows how the world works, and his entire life is built on compartmentalization. He's the sort of man who can do terrible, ugly things and, at the end of the day, sleep well at night.

But Liam's first loyalty is to his own. Originally, Liam was selected for Monarch's Striker program on the basis of his exceptional skills, willpower and physical competence, and he progressed well in the program, even if he was never fully briefed on what Monarch was truly preparing for. However, psychological tests indicated that his attachment to his wife disqualified from completing the program. Once the End of Time arrived, Strikers would have to be effective operatives focused on the tasks at hand. But Liam would not be able to let go. He would become a problem.

This assessment proves prescient, as once Liam discovers that there's an enormous, existential threat to his family, and that his employer will not be including him or his family in its survival plan, everything changes for him. From that point on, Liam's only loyalty is to Emily and his unborn child, and everybody else is expendable—even Liam himself.

Liam is portrayed by Patrick Heusinger.



Characters

Nick Marsters

Like most residents of Riverport, Nick remembers well when city's economy was completely down the toilet. So many people were unemployed or otherwise struggling just to get by; when the shipbuilding industry that had been the backbone of Riverport's economy collapsed, it looked like the town might never recover from its slump.

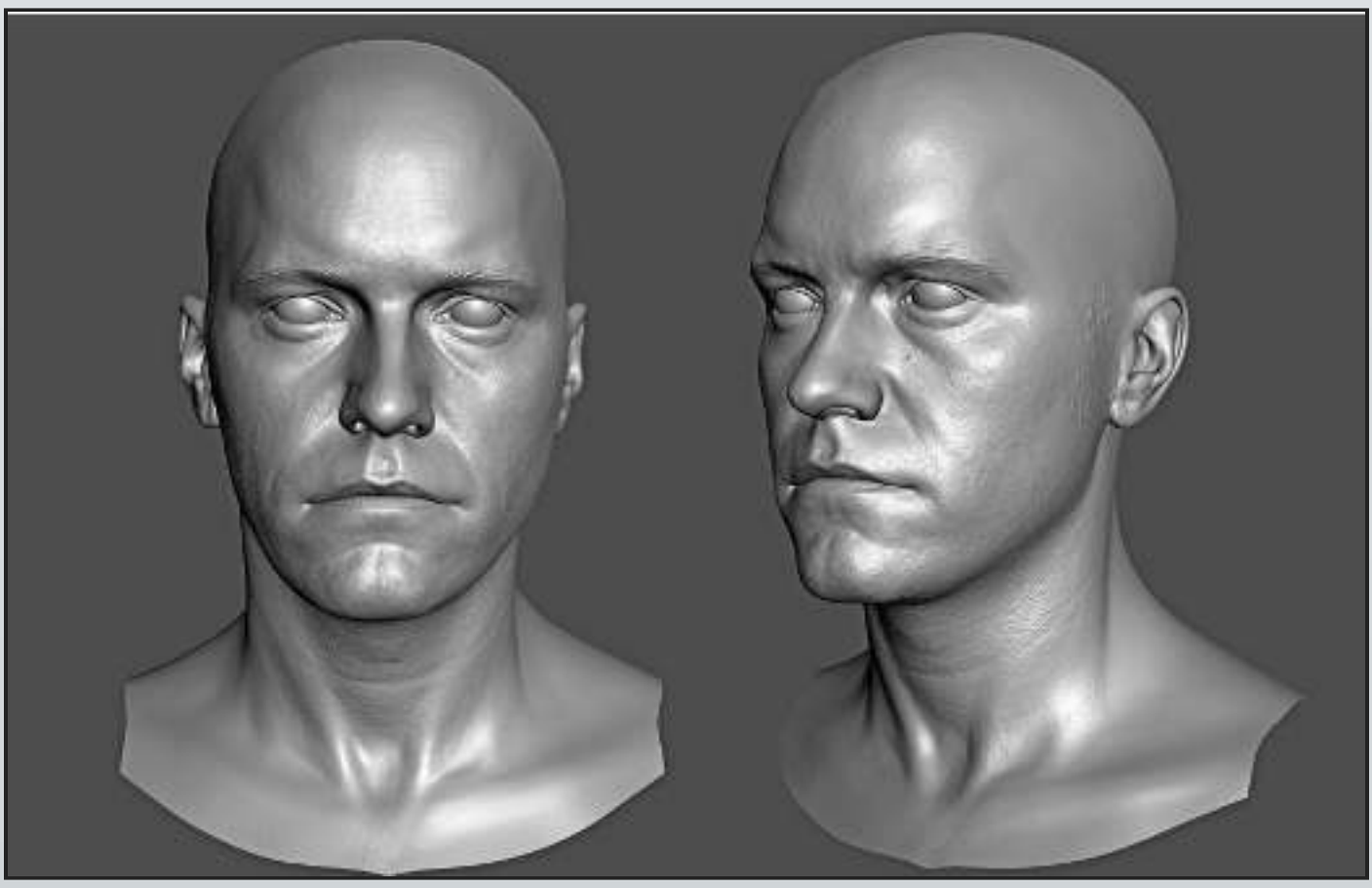
But when Monarch Solutions came in, they came in with jobs—just building the skyscraper that houses Monarch's headquarters was a massive project that brought in a lot of jobs and increased demand for basic services. With Monarch's aggressive campaign of investment in the city, the company's presence has been a real shot in the arm for Riverport. For a blue-collar guy like Nick, that matters a lot. Sitting behind the steering wheel of his cab, he sees the difference every day.

Thus, it comes as a great shock to him when he realizes the company he's held in such high regard isn't what he thought it was—that for all the financial stability it's brought to Riverport, it's also capable of deploying jackbooted thugs with orders to execute innocent people just to advance their own agenda.

For Nick, that feels like a personal insult—he's defended Monarch for years now against any criticism from anybody, be it a friend in a bar or a customer in the back of his cab, and now this? He won't stand for it.

Nick's quick-witted and funny, but his particular combination of imagination and naiveté ensures that he'll never have a reputation as a great thinker. Never one to be very discriminating about his sources, Nick pretty much believes everything he reads on the internet or partially overhears in a crowd. Accordingly, his beliefs are riddled with confused conspiracy theories and misconceptions about how the world actually works. Still, he knows bad guys when he sees them. And he's not about to let them just run roughshod over his city.

Nick is portrayed by Sean Durrie.



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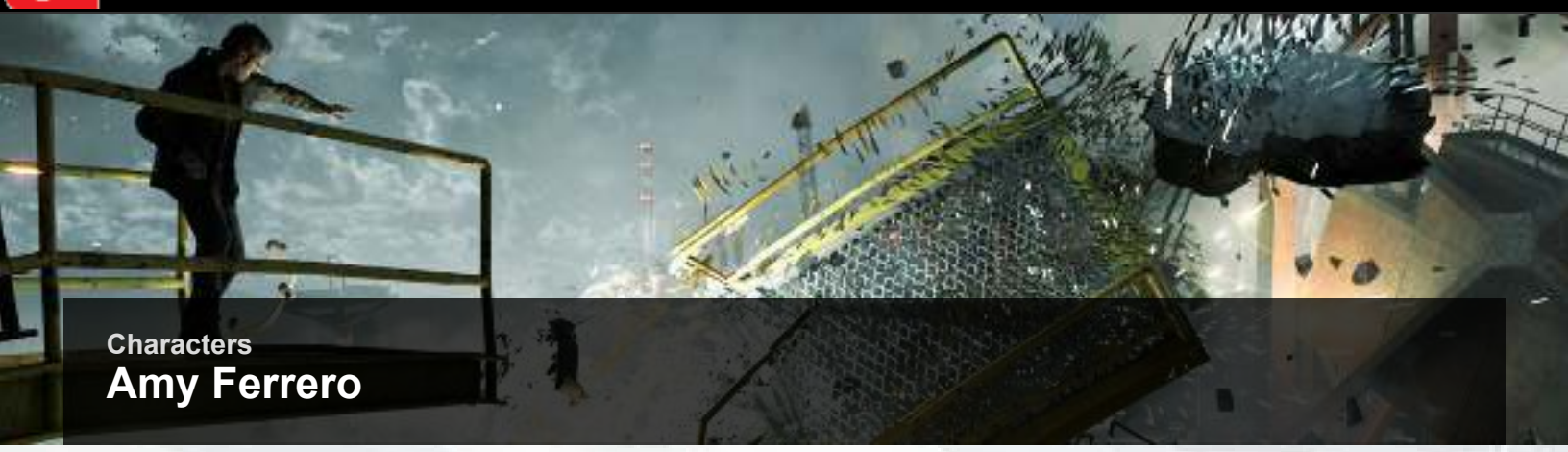


Characters

Amy Ferrero

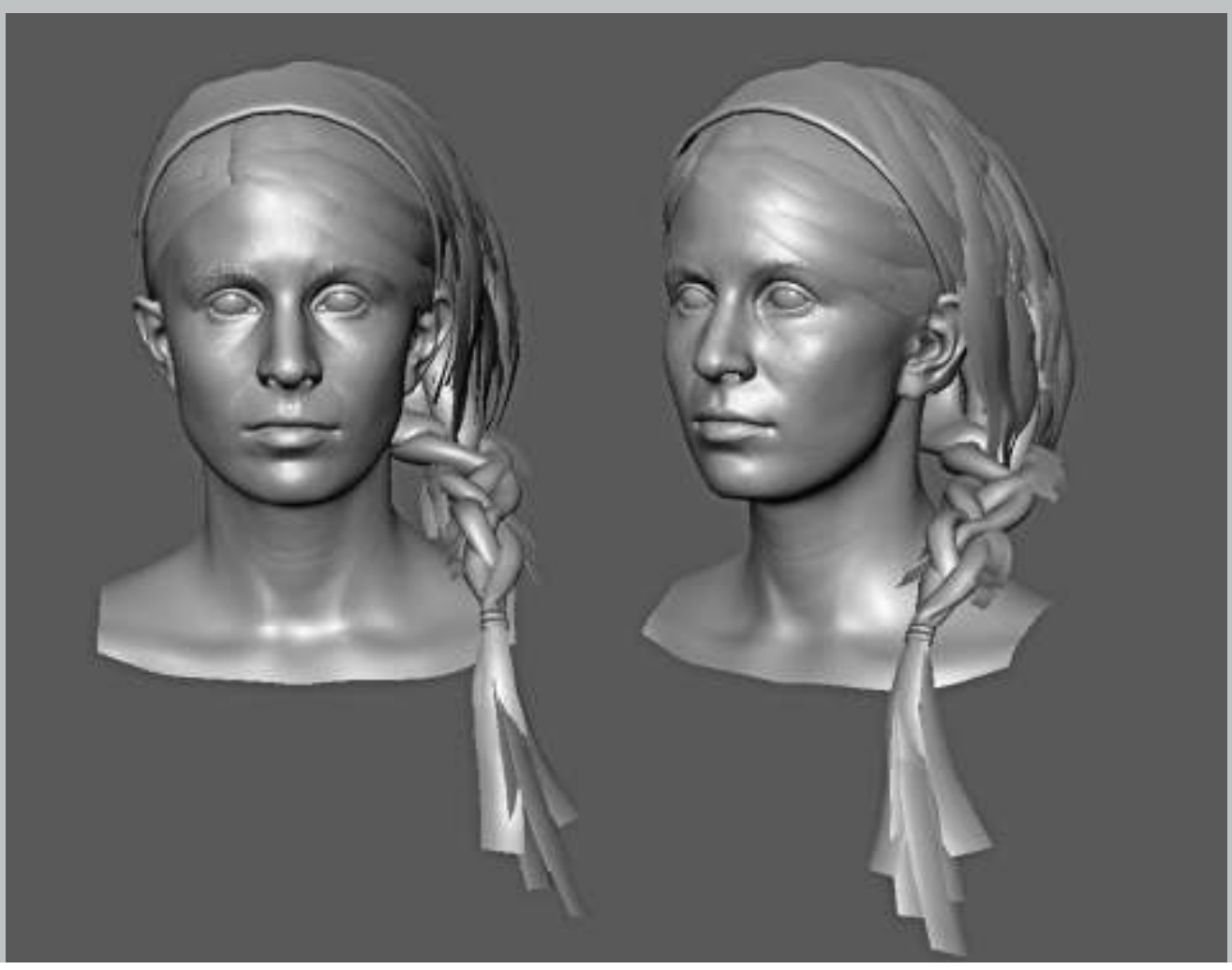
There are people in the world who just don't give a damn, but nobody could ever accuse Amy of being one of them—if anything, Amy's made it her business to care about causes. She's smart, young, and energetic, and her zeal for justice has not yet been tempered by bitter experience and jaded indifference. She knows some people see it as naiveté, but she feels no shame about wanting to believe that the world can be a better place than it is, and that it's up to her to do her part.

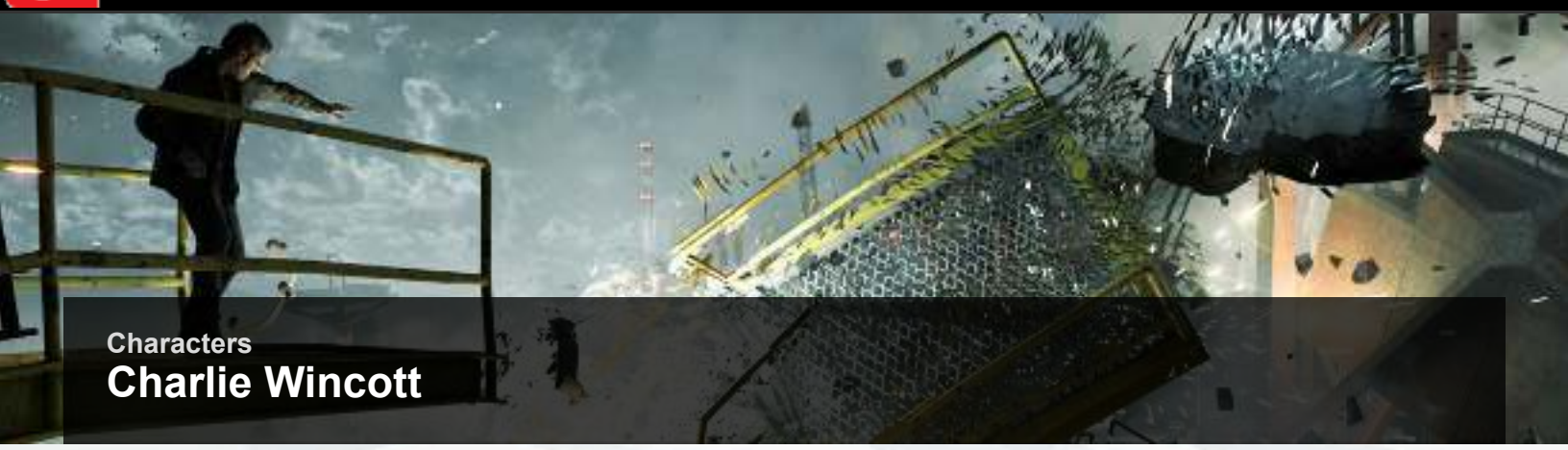
Amy always knew Monarch Solutions was no good. She's seen too many huge corporations play nice in public and get away with outrageous shenanigans behind closed doors. The way Monarch is turning Riverport into a soulless carbon copy of every other featureless place in the world rubs her the wrong way, and the way they get their way just by throwing enough money around, regardless of the impact on the people affected by those decisions, infuriates her.

Still, she never expected Monarch to actually do any of this—the idea of having somebody threaten to murder her family while forcing her to betray her friends and frame an innocent man for a crime he didn't commit was too big, too direct. She was prepared to deal with corruption and intimidation, indifference and apathy—big money rolling over citizens' rights, and everybody looking the other way. This is something different.

But Amy's not going to take it lying down. Being roped into the all-pervading weirdness that is Jack Joyce's life is another thing she didn't expect, but she knows how to adapt, and she's not the type to just sit down and give up, and hope somebody else deals with the situation. Monarch threatened her family, and they can't get away with that. Amy intends to show the world what they are.

Amy is portrayed by Amelia Rose Blaire.





Characters

Charlie Wincott

Charlie Wincott is a weasel. He’s an intelligent man with a great degree of technical competence and a knack for manipulation, but he’s also petty, arrogant and cowardly. In the rat’s nest full of neuroses, fears and resentments that comprise his personality, extremely bad self-esteem and a truly massive ego have found a comfortable balance. To Charlie, everything is a potential challenge to his authority and expertise. Everybody else is a moron that needs to be shown who the man is.

And Charlie is definitely the man. Just ask him.

He’s also very, very lonely. As an expert on computer security and media manipulation, he’s created a bubble of technical superiority and authority for himself, and in it, he’s feels securely above those he considers lesser beings. Charlie has no peers—there are only drones who will do as they’re told, or superiors who never think of him as their equal.

He doesn’t have many friends, either, or any real understanding of how to make them. Like a sad pick-up artist, he’s tried to reduce human Interaction to formulaic behaviors, and when they don’t produce actual results, he’s lost.

Deep down, Charlie knows he’s pathetic; what he doesn’t know is how obvious it is to others. A classic case of a bully who became one as the result of years of bullying, Charlie loves to put others in their place, and hates it when he feels like an outsider—both of which happen constantly.

And yet, there’s more to Charlie than all this. When pushed far enough, when faced with real human emotion and the actual real-world consequences of his incredible arrogance and lack of moral backbone, Charlie digs deep within himself and finds something resembling courage and conviction, and uses them to do something for the sake of others.

Charlie is portrayed by Marshall Allman.

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Part 1

CHAPTER 1 - CLEANER

Running from the Cleaner crew, you and Tiffany make your way through the Old Quarter, and Tiffany brings you to a safe house where you can rest and recover. Tiffany tells you that you need to find a way to get off the island, and that you should talk to Mr. Kim, who is a smuggler who can help you. Tiffany also tells you that you should talk to Mr. Kim's daughter, Jin, who is a mechanic and can help you with your ship.

Tiffany tells you that you need to find a way to get off the island, and that you should talk to Mr. Kim, who is a smuggler who can help you. Mr. Kim's daughter, Jin, is a mechanic and can help you with your ship.

Main Missions	7
Side Missions	2
Collectibles	3

After leaving the safe house through the back door, you find yourself in a narrow alleyway. You can see a few people walking around, but they don't seem to be paying much attention to you.

You make your way through the alleyway and emerge into a busy street. You can see a few shops and stalls, and there are a lot of people walking around. You can also see a few cars driving by.

You continue to walk down the street, and you see a sign for a shop that says "Kim's Electronics". You think that this might be the shop that Tiffany told you about, so you decide to go inside.

You enter the shop and see a man behind the counter. He looks up when you enter and says, "Welcome to Kim's Electronics. How can I help you?"

You tell the man that you are looking for Mr. Kim, and he says that he is Mr. Kim. He asks you what you need, and you tell him that you need to get off the island. He says that he can help you, but he will need to see your ship first.

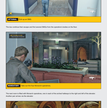
You tell Mr. Kim that you will go get your ship and then come back to see him. He says that he will be waiting for you.

You leave the shop and head back to the alleyway where you left your ship. You get in your ship and start it up. You then head back to the shop and park your ship in front of it.

You go back into the shop and tell Mr. Kim that you have returned with your ship. He says that he will need to see it in order to help you. You tell him that you will show him your ship, and he says that he will be right out.

You go outside with Mr. Kim and show him your ship. He looks it over and says that he can help you. He tells you that he will need to make some repairs to your ship before you can leave. He says that he will need a few days to do the repairs.

You tell Mr. Kim that you will wait for him to finish the repairs. He says that he will let you know when he is done.



You wait for a few days and then you receive a message from Mr. Kim. He says that he has finished the repairs and that you can come and get your ship.

You go back to the shop and tell Mr. Kim that you have come to get your ship. He says that he will be right out.

You go outside with Mr. Kim and he shows you your ship. It looks like it has been repaired and is in good condition.

You tell Mr. Kim that you will pay him for the repairs. He says that he will let you know how much it will cost.

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Part 1

Chapter 1 - Escape

Gordon Freeman wakes up in his room at Black Mesa East, where Barney Calhoun and Isaac Kleiner are already awake. Gordon is late for his train to Black Mesa, and Barney tells him to hurry. Gordon leaves his room and heads to the train station. Upon arriving, he boards the train and sits down. The train departs and Gordon looks out the window as it passes through the Black Mesa Transit System.

Gordon Freeman arrives at the Black Mesa Anomalous Materials complex. He walks through the facility and enters the Lambda Complex. He then enters the Resonance Cascade Research Facility.

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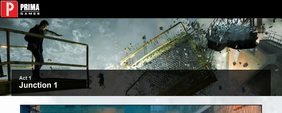


Act 1
Junction 1

JUNCTION 1

In the aftermath of Monarch's operation at the Riverport University, Paul Serene meets his right-hand man and the public face of Monarch, Martin Hatch, at the drydocks, where Monarch has established a presence years ago. Monarch is busy preparing to transport the Time Machine core they stole from the Project Promenade lab at the university to Monarch HQ, but there's another matter for Serene to handle: how to deal with the witnesses to Monarch's activities at the university. He can either choose a hardline approach, killing all witnesses and denying that anything ever happened, or a PR solution, in which they spin the events into a tale of Monarch heroically intervening when an activist protest turns into terrorist action, led by Jack Joyce.

Chronon Sources	0
Intel	0
Collectibles	2
Quantum Ripples	1

Following the cutscene, a Junction plays. It is 5:02 AM, October 10, 2016—25 hours after the Fracture in time. Paul Serene is recording a voice memo in which he explains that he founded Monarch Solutions 17 years ago with a clear purpose. He is recording this as a testimony for how things must be. Meanwhile, we see Liam Burke drag the body of Jack Joyce into a van. Beth Widow is standing nearby observing the scene. A helicopter arrives and Martin Hatch appears.

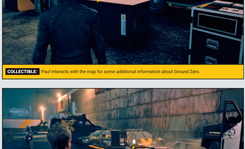
Paul Serene and Martin Hatch discuss that Jack Joyce's transport hasn't arrived yet and that they might have a traitor on the inside. Paul tells him to find Jack and to put his best men on it. As the walk together, Hatch explains that Jack's level of exposure has led to complications—witnesses at the university. He tells Paul that he needs to take a look and they walk towards where the witness is being held.

QUANTUM RIPPLE: As Paul walks, he looks to his right near some cardboard boxes and a truck with its rear door open. He chooses to interact with the ram statue to obtain a Quantum Ripple. This modifies Junction 1, showing two Monarch employees walking through the halls carrying this statue.

OPTIONAL: Just across from the statue on a flatbed truck on the left, Paul interacts with the Core for some additional information regarding its readiness.

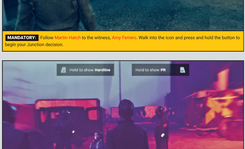
As Paul continues walking, just beyond and to the right of the core, there are three objects he can interact with.

COLLECTIBLE: Paul interacts with the first set of dossiers to obtain a document.



COLLECTIBLE: Paul interacts with the map for some additional information about Ground Zero.

OPTIONAL: Paul interacts with the second set of dossiers to obtain a document.



MANDATORY: Follow Martin Hatch to the witness, Amy Ramirez. Walk into the icon and press and hold the button to begin your Junction decision.

JUNCTION DECISION

Once within the Junction decision moment, the consequences of both decisions can be previewed before deciding which option is chosen. This decision can have wide-ranging consequences, so it is important to choose carefully.

Hold to show Hardline
Serene chooses the Hardline option. He instructs the soldiers at Monarch to kill the witness(es) and cover up the incident.
Confirm Choice
Hold to show PR
Serene chooses the PR option. He instructs the soldiers to frame Jack Joyce as the culprit in the university incident.
Confirm Choice

MANDATORY: Once a decision has been made regarding which path to take, confirm the decision to advance into the level ending cutscene.

In this Junction, Paul Serene must decide if he wants Monarch to take a brutal approach, crush all obstacles and eliminate all witnesses (HARDLINE). This would cause the people of Riverport to turn against Monarch, but their secrets would be safe. Alternatively, he can take a PR-friendly approach and manipulate the public into siding with Monarch by blaming Jack Joyce (PR), however eyewitnesses would be out there and Jack would learn their secrets.

Hold to show Hardline
Serene chooses the Hardline option. He instructs the soldiers at Monarch to kill the witness(es) and cover up the incident.
Confirm Choice
Hold to show PR
Serene chooses the PR option. He instructs the soldiers to frame Jack Joyce as the culprit in the university incident.
Confirm Choice

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Part 1

PROJECT MANAGERIAL

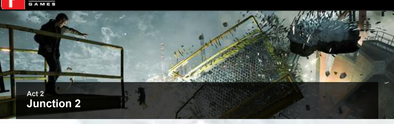
Project Managerial is the first mission in Grand Theft Auto V. Michael, Trevor, and Franklin are introduced, along with the game's protagonist and antagonist.

The mission begins with Michael Townley, a.k.a. Michael De Santa, in a meeting with his therapist, Dr. Friedlander. Michael is unhappy with his life and his family, and Dr. Friedlander suggests that he should "find a project" to help him feel more engaged with his life. Michael then leaves the meeting and drives home to his family, where he is greeted by his wife, Amanda, and his children, Jimmy and Tracey. Michael is not happy to see them, and he tells them to leave him alone.

Meanwhile, Trevor Philips is in the desert, where he is cooking methamphetamine with his partner, Ron. Trevor is a violent and unpredictable man, and he is not happy with Ron's performance. Trevor then leaves the desert and drives to a bar, where he is greeted by his friend, Wade. Trevor is not happy to see Wade, and he tells him to leave him alone.

Franklin Clinton is in the hood, where he is hanging out with his friends, Lamar and Stretch. Franklin is a young man who is trying to make a name for himself in the gang world. Franklin then leaves the hood and drives to a car dealership, where he is greeted by his boss, Simeon Yetarian. Franklin is not happy to see Simeon, and he tells him to leave him alone.

The three protagonists then meet up at a strip club, where they are introduced to their antagonist, Steve Haines. Steve is a corrupt FIB agent who is trying to take down the three protagonists. The mission ends with the three protagonists escaping from the strip club and driving away in a car.

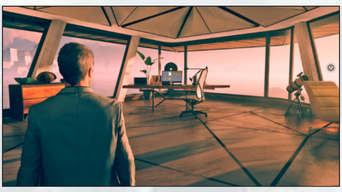


Act 2
Junction 2

BUSINESS/PERSONAL

At the Monarch mansion on Gull Island, Paul Serene and Martin Hatch are debating what to do about Jack Joyce now that he's surrendered. Should Serene ignore Jack's presence and concentrate on his duties as Monarch's leader now that all of their plans are in motion and the situation is developing rapidly, or should he interview Jack himself to find out what he knows—and perhaps salvage something of the friendship they had? He must make this choice between focusing on business or his personal relationships.

Chronon Sources	0
Intel	0
Collectibles	1
Quantum Ripples	0



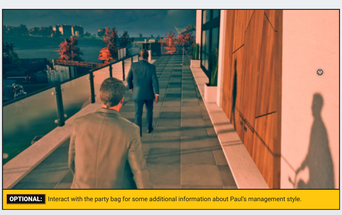
Monarch Mansion—Gull Island, October 9th, 2016 9:35 AM—five hours after the Fracture in time.

Paul laments that the future was so clear as long as he relived the past. Now that he had caught up to the moment he'd left, it ended and all he had now was the plan and the visions.

He knew Jack would come to him, but not why or how it would end.

COLLECTIBLE: Paul walks to his PC on the desk behind him to obtain an email.

Paul and Martin Hatch discuss Jack's claim that he found Will's Time Machine. It took him less than a day—they searched for 17 years. They suspect that Jack has a hidden agenda, but as they want to know about the Time Machine, Paul wants to talk to Jack. Paul follows Hatch out of the room.



OPTIONAL: Interact with the party bag for some additional information about Paul's management style.

As the two men walk, Hatch mentions that he shouldn't let his friendship to Jack cloud his judgment. Hatch stresses that Paul needs to win their people over at the gala tonight and that he should focus on the speech instead of Jack.

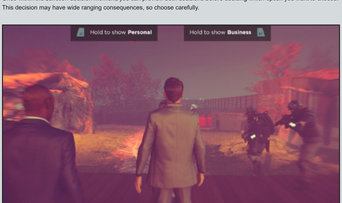
As they continue down the stairs and into the courtyard, Paul complains about speakers that are not set up yet. Martin Hatch defensively says that everything is on schedule and that Paul is micro-managing again. At the bottom of the stairs, they turn right and then head down the path to where Jack is being held.

MANDATORY: Follow Hatch to where Jack is being held. Walk into the icon and press and hold the button to begin your Junction decision moment.

OPTIONAL: Paul can also walk over to the sports car that is parked in the driveway nearby. He mentions that he was thinking about a road trip he took a long time ago in a car much less comfortable than this.

JUNCTION DECISION

Once within the Junction decision moment, you can preview both decisions before deciding which option you want to choose. This decision may have wide ranging consequences, so choose carefully.



MANDATORY: Once you've decided which path you would like to take, confirm your decision to advance into the level-ending cutscene.

Hold to show Personal
Serene chooses to focus on his relationship with Jack and let Monarch fend for itself for a while.
A Confirm Choice
Hold to show Business
Serene chooses to focus on leading Monarch rather than wasting time on Jack.
A Confirm Choice

In this Junction, Paul Serene has to decide if he wants to try to reach Jack and make him see reason (PERSONAL) or if he should let Hatch deal with him and concentrate on running Monarch (BUSINESS).

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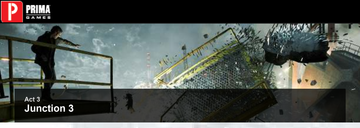
Environments

Here are some of the environments I've done for various projects. Some of them are personal projects, some are for clients, and some are for my own amusement. Enjoy!

Environments
Environments
Environments



Act 3
Junction 3

SOFIA AMARAL / MARTIN HATCH

In the aftermath of the disaster that the party turned into, Serene is enraged. Who helped Jack escape? Dr. Amaral was the only person who could prepare the treatments Serene needs for his ever-worsening Chronon Syndrome—how could she be gone? How did they know to grab her?

Hatch has been warning Serene about traitors, and now claims Dr. Amaral must have been working against Serene all along. She wasn't kidnapped, she orchestrated everything. But Serene isn't sure; Dr. Amaral's been there for him for a long time. And if she is loyal, that means somebody else isn't. Maybe somebody very close to him. Serene now has to decide whether to believe Hatch, or Dr. Amaral.

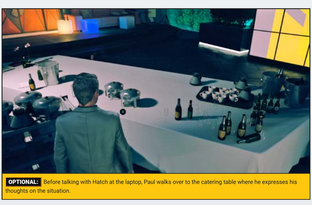
Chronon Sources	0
Intel	0
Collectibles	0
Quantum Ripples	0

Monarch Mansion—The CFR Chamber, October 10th, 2016, 5:04 AM—25 hours after the Fracture in time.

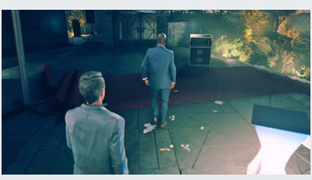
Paul laments this "thing" growing inside him. Dr. Amaral was developing a cure for the Chronon Syndrome—she was the only one who could. When Jack took her, Paul's chances for a cure diminished greatly. Angrily, Paul attacks Hatch and accuses him of not doing everything to stop them.

Hatch tells Paul that his sickness is clouding his judgment and that he's on his side. A Monarch operative appears with news that they recovered Amaral's laptop. Paul wants to see her data about how quickly the Fracture was spreading.

Martin Hatch starts to walk down the staircase. Paul Serene follows him.

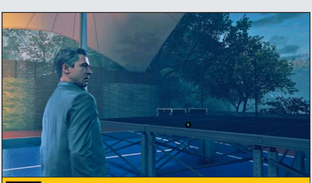


OPTIONAL: Before talking with Hatch at the laptop, Paul walks over to the catering table where he expresses his thoughts on the situation.



Martin Hatch believes that Liam was not working alone, that others inside Monarch are opposing Paul—even questioning the Lifeboat plan. He begs Paul to let him clean house, that even Amaral could be one of the people opposing him. Paul does not believe that to be the case.

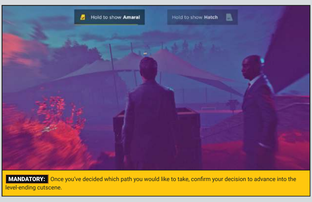
Both men turn and walk toward the laptop.



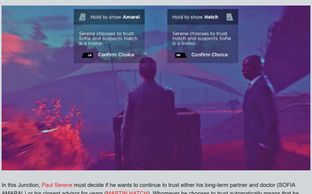
OPTIONAL: Walk down the staircase and approach the stage to hear about the speech.
Once complete, Paul walks back to the laptop where Martin Hatch is standing.

JUNCTION DECISION

Once within the Junction decision moment, you can preview both decisions before deciding which option you want to choose. This decision may have wide ranging consequences, so choose carefully.

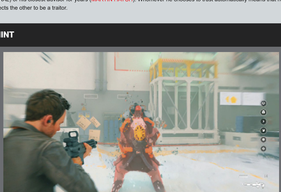


MANDATORY: Once you've decided which path you would like to take, confirm your decision to advance into the level-ending cutscene.


Hold to show Amaral
Serene chooses to trust Sofia and suspects Hatch is a traitor.
Confirm Choice
Hold to show Hatch
Serene chooses to trust Hatch and suspects Sofia is a traitor.
Confirm Choice

In this Junction, Paul Serene must decide if he wants to continue to trust either his long-term partner and doctor (SOFIA AMARAL) or his closest advisor for years (MARTIN HATCH). Whomever he chooses to trust automatically means that he suspects the other to be a traitor.

HINT



Time Rush is the best method to fight Juggernauts as this unit is neither able to turn quickly nor adjust its firing direction.

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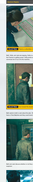
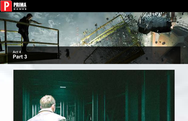


Early concept art - Ryan Church



ACT Part 3

SWIMMING POOL 2010

Emmanuel Mouhon	1
Jean	2
Dubreuilh	4
Dominique Peyrac	5

Bradbury Swimming Hall, July 4th, 2010 5:53 PM - ten years before the Fracture in time.

Jack successfully completes his first trip through time and re-emerges inside the comfort of Will's Time Machine. His first objective is to retrieve his LOTR.

He emerges in the pool area of the Bradbury Swimming Hall, but it has changed. Lots of things are littered on the ground and it looks more like a graffiti artist(s) as opposed to an eventful experience. Jack knows to self-shield.

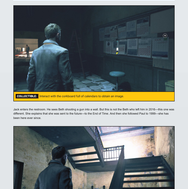
[Visual Hint] Interact with 6 as player as usual.

As Jack searches the area, he finds a computer on a decidedly non-retro, semi-wooden desk.

[Visual Hint] Interact with the nearby laptop to obtain an audio file.

As he continues to look around, Jack also sees a retro on the same wooden table.

Several large paintings lean against a wall, and Jack checks out the images. Suddenly, he hears what sounds like gunshots from the other end of the swimming pool. He runs in that direction to investigate.

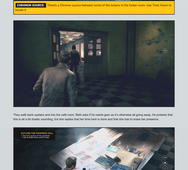


As heads up the stairs and continues through the double doors that lead to the restrooms.

Continuing his search for the origin of the gunshots, Jack encounters an area that used to be a small bistro (ish).

[Visual Hint] Enter these doors to receive a Chronon wound.
[Optional] Before entering the pool, inspect the graffiti artwork next to the large door for more information.

Before further investigating the source of the gunshots, Jack drops into the small pool and walks toward the exit scaffolding in the corner.



[Visual Hint] Enter this scaffolding, interact with the pool door to Bath's back to obtain a Chronon.

[Visual Hint] Interact with the scaffolding from the pool below to obtain a Chronon.

Jack enters the restrooms. He sees Bath shooting a gun into a wall. But this is not the Bath who left him in 2010—this one looks different. She explains that she was sent to the future—to the End of Time. And then she followed Paul to 1899—she has been here ever since.

[Visual Hint] Use the mirror shown to receive a Chronon wound.

Following Bath, Jack asks where Will is — and where the countermeasure is. Bath answers that the countermeasure is at Will's workshop, where he built it. As he's talking, Jack hears a Chronon Source and gets up the stairs above the silhouette targets.

Jack heads toward Bath near the double doors. He says that they need to go to the workshop to get the countermeasure. She agrees, but without conviction or energy. Bath insists that there is so much Jack doesn't know. But he's never seen. She had given up on the idea that he would ever come.

As she opens the metal door, Jack asks her if they are still in this together. Bath only replies that she told him before that their fate had been laid out for them.

Jack continues to follow Bath, but before walking up the stairs, he turns and enters the locker room on the left with both doors wide open.

[Visual Hint] Go over to Chronon source between doors of the lockers in the locker room. See "Time Chronon Source" section.

They walk back upstairs and into the outfit room. Both asks if he needs gear as it's otherwise all going away. He protests that he is all of a sudden sounding, but she replies that the time has come and that she has to warn her presence.

[Visual Hint] In the outfit room, interact with the pieces on the table to obtain a Chronomod.

[Visual Hint] Standing shuffleboard covered in sticky notes is nearby. Interact with it to obtain an Image.

Both has assembled a huge arsenal of weapons and puts packs his favorite. He then tries to apologize that he didn't come after her, but she doesn't want to hear it. Jack says that they will undo this all and it gets Bath asleep. She grabs him and says that time cannot be changed—she tried. She was sent to the End of Time. She saw where this leads . . . and she was there her. Jack tells her that they will fix . . . and they begin the trip.

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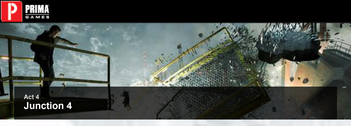
BELLS (ARROWSHOP 10/10)

Today, Rusty, Pickle's son-in-law, Nate, moved in, much to the consternation of Jack, Jack and Ed's first task was to help Nate move his belongings from the back of his truck and into the shop. Nate's belongings consisted of a few boxes of clothing, a few boxes of kitchen goods, and a box of — no joke — Bells. Ed and Jack were not amused.

We don't want anything to do. Traveling to Bethel is bothering with. Jack: Nate could like a mini-Maverick. My Chevy Tuscumbia and me in Tibbee, Mississippi, Jack Spratt could eat no fat, his wife could eat no lean. We have more in common than you think. Ed: Jack, I'm not sure that's a compliment. Jack: Nate, I'm not sure that's a name. Nate: Jack, I'm not sure that's an insult. Ed: Nate's a name. It also comes in Bill and Jack. Ed: Jack's a name. Jack: Jack is a name. Ed: Jack is a name. Jack: Jack is a name. Nate: Jack is



Act 4
Junction 4

CONTROL/SURRENDER

Consumed by pain and paranoia, Serene's now truly struggling with his Chronon Syndrome. He no longer knows who to trust, and all of his plans seem to be slipping through his fingers. He knows the End of Time is getting closer every second; he knows that his Lifeboat Protocol is ready, but he isn't sure if it'll be any good.

One of his men comes to him with a damaged Chronon Syndrome treatment, and Serene isn't sure if he can trust it. Will it help? Or is it a trap to get him to poison himself? A part of him just wants to give in to the thing he feels inside himself. Another part needs to maintain control and carry the mission to its end. Serene has to decide whether to give into paranoia and rage, refusing the treatment, or maintain control and take it.

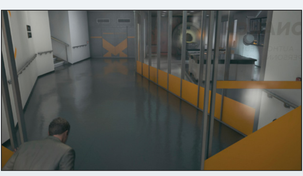
Chronon Sources	0
Intel	0
Collectibles	1
Quantum Ripples	0

CFR Chamber: October 10, 2016—5:05am—25 hours after the Fracture in time.

Paul doesn't have much time left. He spent 17 years working it out, planning, building Monarch, because he knew what was coming—and he knew it couldn't be stopped. But what he built turned against him. He doesn't see the point in saving them if he can't trust them. He feels he's slipping away. The sickness is accelerating.

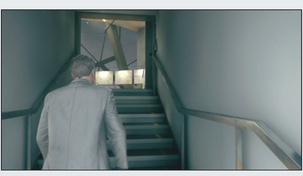
The CFR had cost him so much, but he has harnessed its power, and with it his plan will work. He will be able to keep the lights on when the world goes dark.

A Monarch soldier contacts him about the cleanup report of Dr. Kim's lab he wanted. Paul tells the soldier to meet him in his office. He will be there once he seals the CFR chamber.



The lab explosion, his treatments—all gone. First things first: seal the chamber. The Chronon Field Regulator, Will's precious countermeasure, has to be kept safe at all cost. The Lifeboat depends on it.

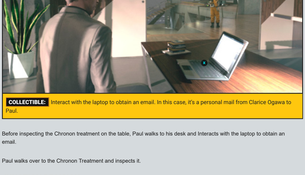
Paul exits the CFR chamber and locks the door behind him, using the terminal. Once completed, the soldier confirms that he's in his office. Paul, clearly sick, slowly moves to meet him.



Paul continues through the lab and up the staircase to Paul's office. He is near the end. He doesn't know how to trust anymore—some wanted the Lifeboat to fail, but Paul does not understand why.

Once inside this office, he slowly walks up the large staircase. The Monarch soldier awaits him above.

At the top, a soldier waits near Paul's desk. The soldier explains that they searched Dr. Kim's destroyed lab. He reports that the treatments were destroyed, but there was one left. The casing appears to be broken, however.



COLLECTIBLE: Interact with the laptop to obtain an email. In this case, it's a personal mail from Clarice Ogawa to Paul.

Before inspecting the Chronon treatment on the table, Paul walks to his desk and Interacts with the laptop to obtain an email.

Paul walks over to the Chronon Treatment and inspects it.

JUNCTION DECISION

MANDATORY: Once you've decided which path you would like to take, confirm your decision to advance into the level-ending cutscene.

Once within the Junction decision moment, you can preview both decisions before deciding which option you want to choose. This decision may have wide-ranging consequences, so choose carefully.

Hold to show Control
Serene holds on to his reason in a final effort to see his plan through.
LB Confirm Choice
Hold to show Surrender
Serene stops fighting his Chronon Syndrome. He gives up on his plan and Monarch.
RB Confirm Choice

In this Junction, Paul Serene has to decide if he wants to hold onto his reason in a final effort to see his plan through (CONTROL), or if he should stop fighting his Chronon Syndrome and lose faith in his plan and Monarch (SURRENDER).

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FINAL MOMENTS

At the Bradbury Swimming Pool, Hitman and Lewis ask the Time Machine to return to what, for Jack, is the present day, a little after the point of departure, at Monarch HQ. When they do, they find the pair full of Monarch operatives. Victoria has finally discovered Hitman's interest, and they proceed to fight.

Jack has a final encounter with Serrano. As Lewis leaves for a game-over reason, he won't be, due to his use the Time Machine in the Finale Lobby. Jack's ultimate fate is down to you. Then, the crowd cannot be moved, and the Hitman leaves.

With Anna Serrey running out, Jack and Hitman start to prepare the counterassault. Even as the drones land to arm Hitman's team with weapons, Jack is left to his own devices. Hitman's team is split into two, with Victoria and Lewis heading to the Lobby, the elevator shaft, and Hitman in control of the Lobby, but Jack's fate can be anywhere. Only counterassault is available, simplifying the Mission report Finish. Remember to collect Intel, and, unable to exit outside of a roller, disappears. And Hitman's team can't be moved, so don't bother trying.

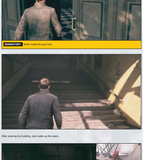
Victoria's encounter with Anna Yun Kozol establishes connection from Purpose to arrive. They must massacre the impossible agents of arrive. But as Hitman's preparations to the moment on reveals of the counterassault, Jack suddenly appears in the Lobby, and Hitman's team is split into two. Victoria and Lewis head to the Lobby, and Hitman takes the time for early questions of the Counterassault. And the Reverse. Is now a excellent vision of the arriving.

Jack managed to save his brother, and hopefully they managed to keep the universe holding. But for how long? And at what cost?

Mission Success	✓
Intel	0
Collectibles	0
Survivors Applied	0

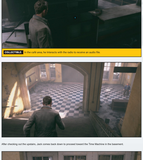
Bradbury Swimming Hall Cobber 9th, 2015 7:30 AM—three hours after Kaymore is here.

Hitman and Lewis are in the Hall of the Bradbury Swimming Hall. Will apologizes that the pair used to the earth. He said that when he started his work, Jack had been so young, years ago he got it. He just wants to go to the future to fix this mess.



Lewis Stern Time Travel Explore to locate a Prisoner experts.
Hitman We need to make a concerted effort to go to 2015.

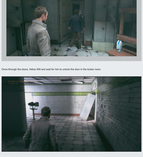
It's Jack is surprising, however, he thinks a Victorian science near the dead.



Jack Marcus Hitman! Lewis! Victoria! Jack! Hitman! Lewis! Victoria! Jack!

Will opens the trunk door to the existing and they need some. Surprisingly, sure while MG Hall as he in the medicine bars. If it's totally, even using a Grand 100 Gold, and from the Hunter's, but it was too dangerous.

Hitman Jack! Victoria! Lewis!



After entering this building, Jack walks up the stairs.

Jack Marcus Hitman! Lewis! Victoria! Jack! Hitman! Lewis! Victoria! Jack!

Hitman and Lewis are in the Hall of the Bradbury Swimming Hall. Will apologizes that the pair used to the earth. He said that when he started his work, Jack had been so young, years ago he got it. He just wants to go to the future to fix this mess.

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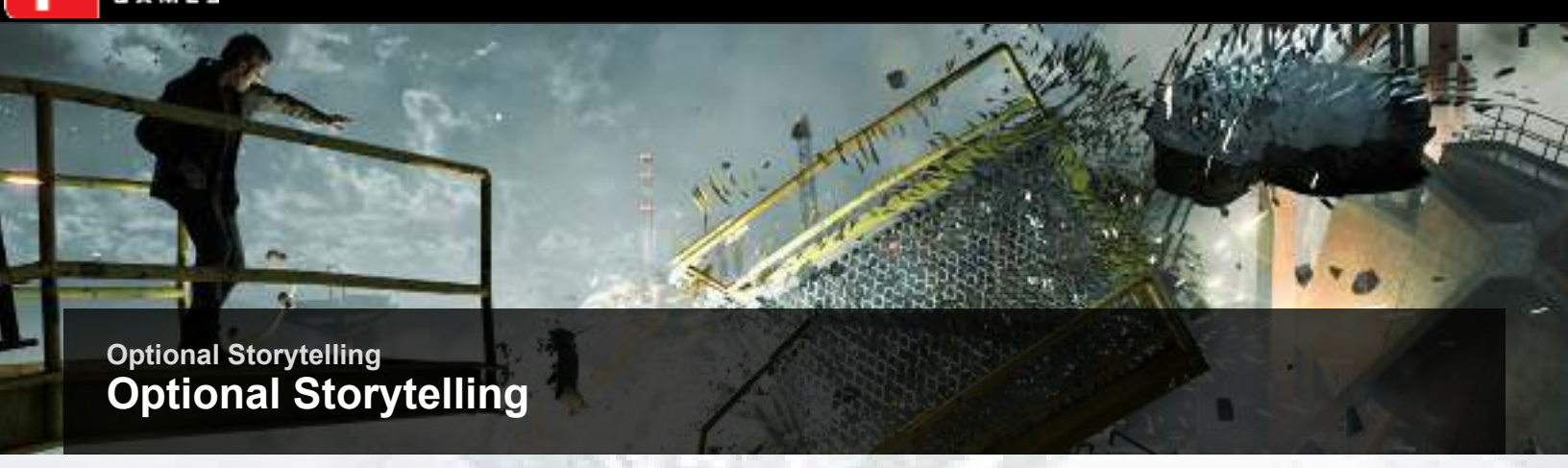
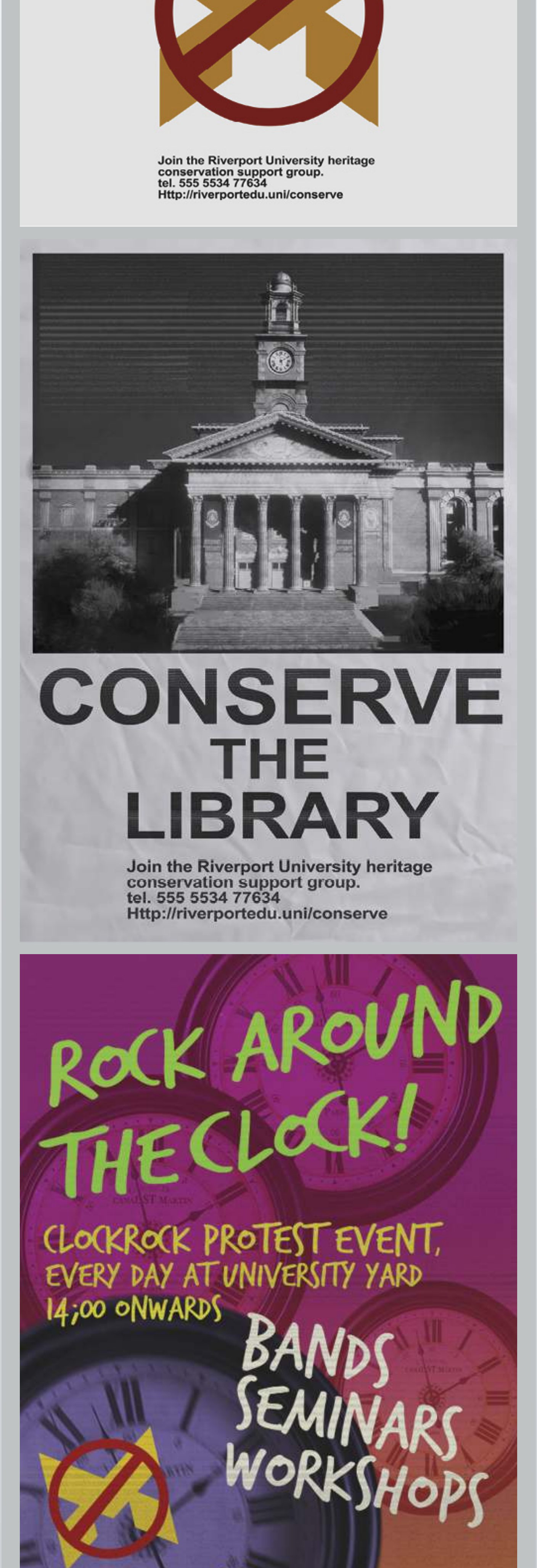


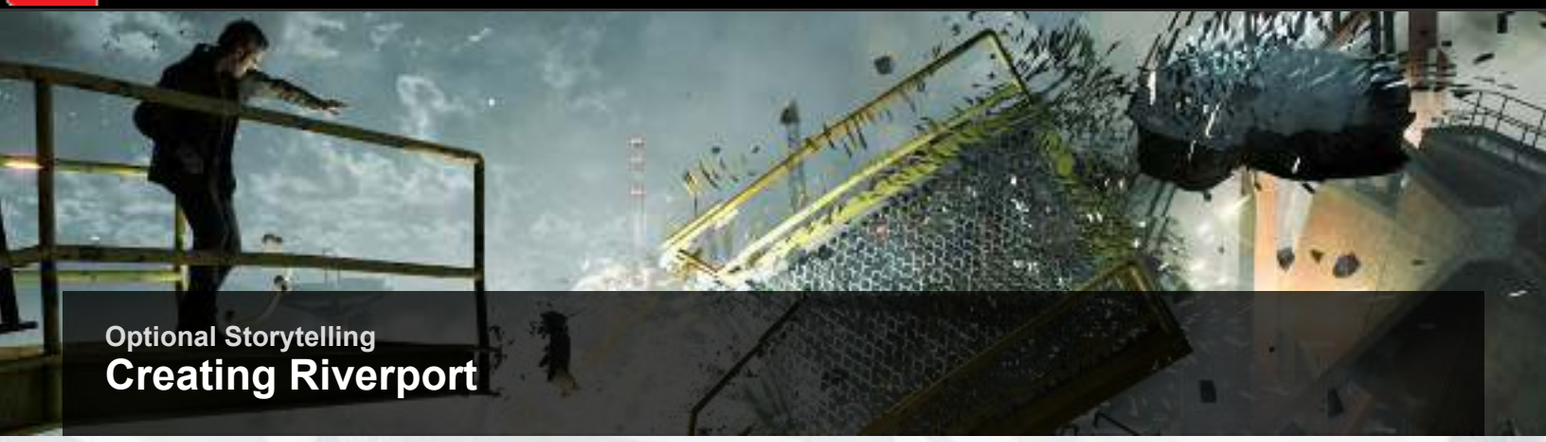
Optional Storytelling

One of our goals for Quantum Break was to create not only a new game, but a new game world—one with a degree of depth that went beyond what was happening to our on-screen characters at any given time during gameplay.

To that end, we seeded Riverport with as much optional content as possible. By definition, “optional content” is something the player doesn’t have to Interact with in order to complete the game—it’s there particularly for those players who’re interested in a deeper and more varied experience. Finding it may at times require exploration and an eye for detail. In the case of Quantum Break, with many of the game’s events determined by the Junction choices, not all of the optional content is available on the first playthrough—much of it changes depending on the decisions made during Junction moments.

There’s a great deal of written optional content in Quantum Break—over 50,000 words’ worth of discoverable notes, e-mail messages and other text-based content. There are also audio recordings, radio shows (hosted by the anti-Monarch Bobby Radford or pro-Monarch Theresa Sedmak, depending on whether the player has chosen the Hardline or PR path in the game’s first Junction moment) and a great number of signs, posters and other images that all serve to give a degree of detail and depth to the story.





Optional Storytelling

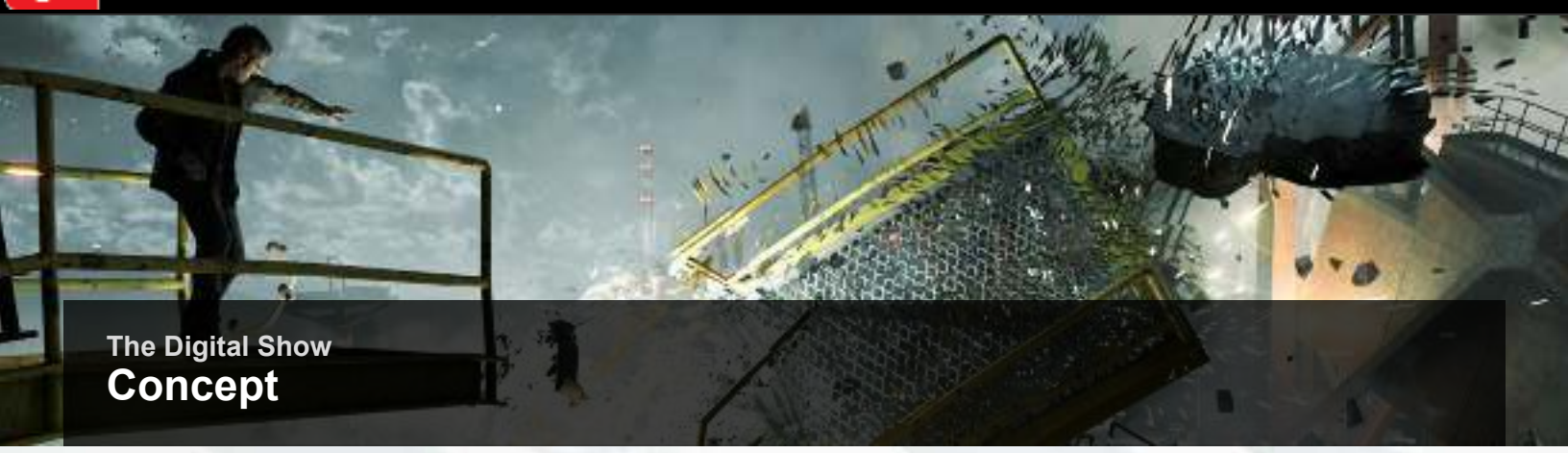
Creating Riverport

Creating a new fictional place is always a great deal of fun, but it also provides significant challenges.

In the case of Riverport, we knew that we wanted to create a believable East Coast city that was clearly past its prime due to an economic downturn. We had no specific real-world counterpart to model the city after, but we designed the physical flow of a river, various bridges, a dry dock, a harbor, and all other associated logic of a mid-sized port town.

What was specifically fascinating to develop was the degree of impact that a powerful company like Monarch Solutions would have on a town like Riverport—and how that impact would be felt architecturally and sociologically.

Quantum Break opens with a protest of some of the citizens of Riverport against the planned demolition of an old library building at Riverport University. The tension in town had to feel as real as possible, as it's a key to the believability of the entire world of Quantum.

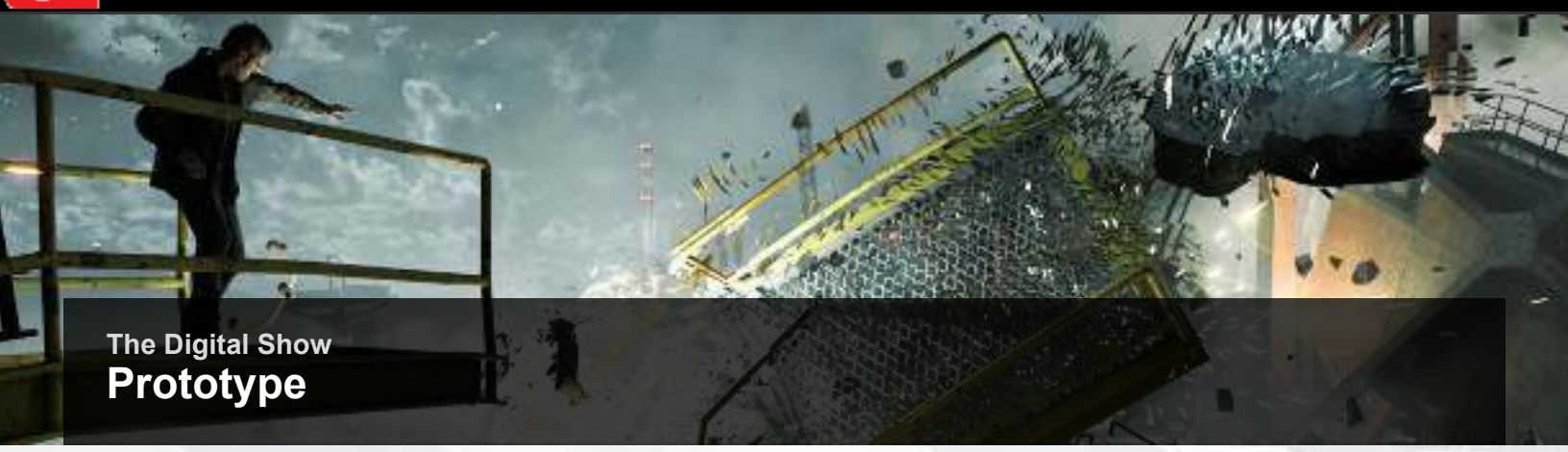


The Digital Show
Concept

It took a long time to settle on what the basic concept of the show should be. At first, even its format wasn't clear—there was talk of doing a season or a miniseries of an actual TV show that would've been either broadcast or made available digitally, but separately from the game. There were certain advantages to this approach—it would've been very accessible to even the non-gamer mainstream audience, for one thing. There were some ambitions of having it be a standalone thing that could've enjoyed success on its own.

However, there was no guarantee that a person watching the show under those circumstances would play the game, or even have access to it. That meant the game/show connection would have to be tenuous at best. It was clear that to continue along those lines would've meant really creating two very different products, both of which might be of good quality, but which wouldn't feel like they are happening at the same time.

While there was nothing wrong with that, it didn't feel particularly groundbreaking. It was clear that the ambition was for



The Digital Show
Prototype

Readers who have followed Quantum Break closely may remember seeing glimpses of this prototype, as some footage of it was included in the 2013 Quantum Break teaser: it featured a woman talking to a spooky child, who appeared to be able to see the future. All of that footage and all of those concepts were scrapped; even as it was being made, we already knew the content was completely wrong.

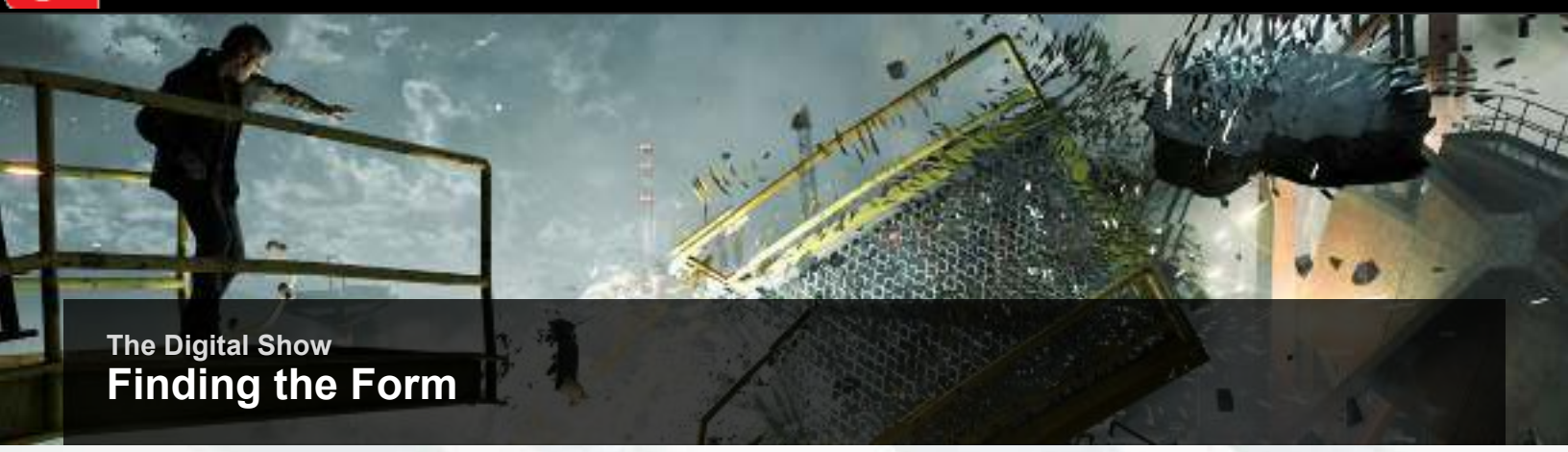
Even so, that scene with the little girl is indicative of some of the early story ideas for the show, and some people were very keen on them. What we had settled on at the time was a pair of characters—a journalist and a disgraced former Monarch employee with a dark background (you can see some traces of him in what eventually became Liam)—investigating Monarch Solutions. The show was conceived as a classic “monster of the week” setup, where each episode would see them tackle some new aspect of Monarch and uncover strange secrets. It was very reminiscent of X-Files, with outsiders trying to find a way in to understand what was truly going on.

However, at Remedy, we had problems with the concept. In itself, it might have been good, but there was no real connection to the events or themes of the game.

Furthermore, our vision for Monarch Solutions and the world we were building wasn’t quite compatible with it—in order for this concept to work, you needed a great deal of strangeness. But we weren’t trying to build an “anything goes” situation, where random people could have supernatural powers just through some quirk of genetics, or where things went bump in the night. Which is not to say that Quantum Break, as we saw it, was rooted in harsh realism, but it felt important that the strangeness in the world was caused by Time Travel and things related to it. Children with psionic powers didn’t really fit.

Furthermore, much of the that show concept depended on the idea that Monarch is inherently evil, and is constantly engaging in deplorable acts, such as extreme human experimentation on unwilling participants or engaging in dangerous, unethical activities just to make a little more profit. In that portrayal of Monarch, the company would be a hotbed of secret crimes against humanity, manipulating everything and everybody—again, something that seemed very X-Files to us.

But for us, Monarch wasn’t about ruling the world or gaining power for its own sake. We felt strongly that going in that direction would dilute that concept and, frankly, make Monarch something we’d seen so many times before. Furthermore, it seemed clear that with the threat of the Fracture such a key element in the game, any show concept that didn’t involve that would just alienate the viewer. In order for the show to engage, it had to feel like it was connected to what the player had just



The Digital Show
Finding the Form

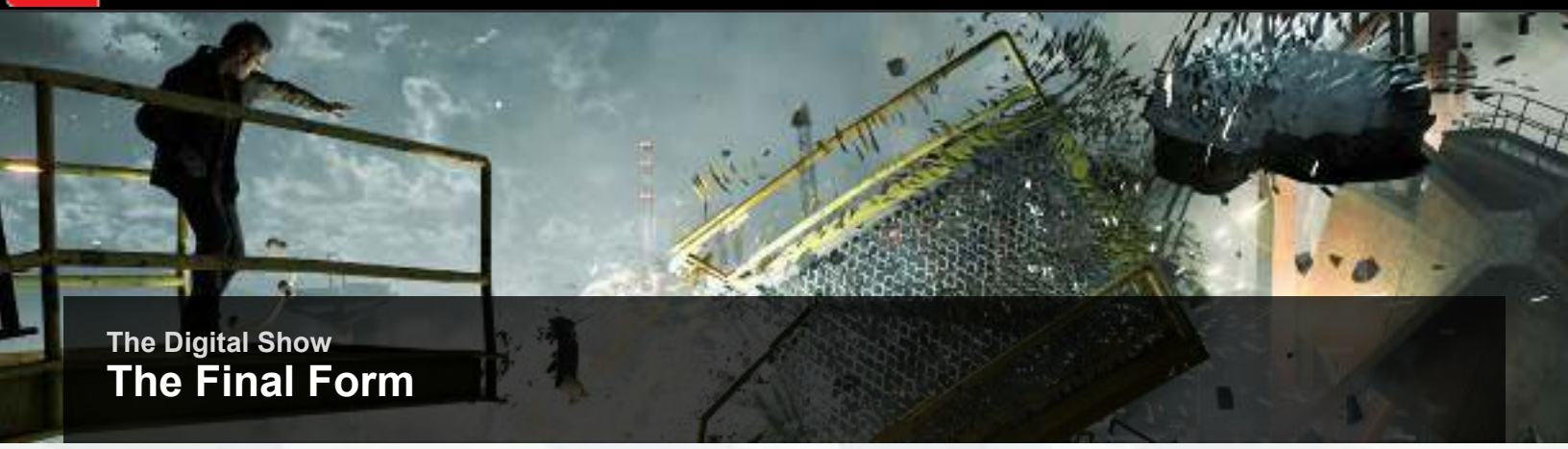
Our counterparts on the show side, on the other hand, while certainly not ignorant of what we were doing, didn't feel the same constraints as we did. For them, it was much more about trying to come up with the most exciting and fun ideas. We were simply in different phases of the project—they were in a pre-production phase were almost anything can still be considered a viable idea, whereas we were dealing with production that was already well underway, with many things nailed down.

The 10-hour time difference between America's West Coast and Finland introduced additional challenges.It took quite a bit of time for us to get on the same page.

Eventually, certain clarity emerged. The game would be about the heroes, and the show would be about the villains. You'd see things from Jack's point of view in the game, and in the show, you'd get to see Monarch's internal workings. Once we decided that we would in fact have Paul Serene be the character who experiences the Junction moments and makes the Junction choices, the connection between the game and the show became much easier to forge. (In earlier versions, Jack had this power—but Jack wasn't directly connected to Monarch, so having the consequences become visible in the show was much harder.)

Concepts like Charlie and Liam being forced to work together despite despising each other had traction, and the Lifeboat Program becoming the thing that drives them tied in to the game's concepts very comfortably. The show characters' perspective to the looming End of Time was totally different than Jack's, but on a fundamental level, they were all trying to deal with the same threat.

While we already had settled on many major things on the game side and were somewhat resistant to change, we made every attempt to ensure a constant flow of information and concepts from the show to the game. For instance, Martin Hatch was a character that didn't really exist for us until the show came along, and he quickly took on far greater meaning than we initially expected, growing from a ruthless and intelligent thug in a suit in charge of many of Monarch's research and security projects to Paul Serene's enigmatic right-hand man, who grew to also have a presence in the game in several key moments.



The Digital Show

The Final Form

You could also tell that not everybody involved in the process was necessarily familiar with how games and stories in games worked—the idea of the Junction moment threw many people for a loop. The challenge wasn't just to come up with story branches, but branches that didn't branch too far—and ones that that still fit in with the game story. Working them out was a very complicated task.

The final rewrite for the show happened about a month before shooting started, and it was vital—structurally, it remained much the same as before, but almost every scene was rewritten to make them flow better, and much of the actual characters really didn't find their voices and personalities until then. It was a tremendous push, and it improved the show in innumerable ways.

Despite the obvious importance of the branching content and the Junction moments, it can be argued that the most important connective tissue between the game and the show is the characters. Much of it comes down to the facial capture technology we have at Remedy—thanks to it, it's obvious to the audience that Paul Serene, for example, is always played by Aidan Gillan. Whether you see Serene in the game or the show, he feels like the same character—he's got the voice, the mannerisms, the kind of subtle facial movements that are unique to Aidan. There have certainly been video game characters that have been modeled after their actors before, but we have reached a point where it feels like that actors are truly inhabiting their digital doubles.

We've used to seeing that in film, but in video games, that kind of consistency is unprecedented. It suggests exciting things for the future: despite the high quality we've achieved on Quantum Break, this is only the first time we've truly done this, and we're only getting started with the technology. It'll be interesting how far we can take this kind of storytelling in the future.

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Unusual Materials

Kill Your Darlings

OVERVIEW

When you look back on a long, complex game project, the end result rarely resembles your original plans and concepts. There are a thousand reasons to make changes during production—there are aesthetic choices, design changes, technical issues and story rewrites—and sometimes you just change your mind because you realize you can make it work better.

The phrase "kill your darlings" is something that's often thrown around Ryanoff, almost as a joke, but it describes a deep truth: often you're dealing with concepts or even finished pieces of content that are the result of dedication and passion, and having to let go of them is hard. In the end, you look at them, and you look at what the game needs, and you look at the resources at your disposal, and then you make some hard choices.

Here are some of the concepts and ideas we cut from the finished game at various points in development. Some of them we lost because we just couldn't make them work, others because they didn't fit in with the rest of the game. Some of them we cut just because we had to cut scope in order to finish the game on time. None of them were particularly easy.

ROADS NOT TAKEN

When Quantum Break was originally conceived, the standards for what is now the current generation of console gaming were still very much up in the air—we didn't even know what the actual hardware specs for the Xbox One were. We also didn't realize how high we would raise the bar on our graphics—to be blunt, we assumed that we would certainly improve on what we did with Alan Wake, but nobody expected the level of improvement to be as extensive as it eventually ended up being.

Accordingly, we originally had an ambitious plan that involved four playable characters, all of whom would have been superpowered like Jack is, and the story would have featured an ensemble cast of characters opposing Paul Serene. Jack was still the main character, but the others were very much in key roles.

However, once we actually started to look at resourcing, it became obvious this was much more than we could do if we intended to actually get everything done. So we had to scope, and eventually ended up with just two playable characters—Jack and Beth—as the core characters, but it allowed us to really focus the story.

At the same time, we also made some other major structural changes, and most of the characters were utterly different from what they ended up as—in many cases, they only retained their names and a couple of key elements. The relationships were also entirely different. For example, at one point we were actually William's contemporary and best friend, and something of an unofficial uncle to Jack. At one point, the idea was that William and Serene discovered Time Travel together, and ended up in a bitter, secret conflict.

Dr. Arnaral used to be William's assistant and Jack's ex-girlfriend. Beth was a college student in a role quite similar to Amy's. Jack was William's slacker brother, who worked as a janitor at the university. The university experiment in 2016 was actually run by Will, not by Serene. There was even a version where Jack and Beth were in a rock band together. In one version, Serene sent three assassins back in time to murder Jack and Beth when they were still children (one of those assassins, Gibson, made it onto the show—or at least his name did). In another, Jack got shot in the head when he refused to talk during an interrogation, and Beth had to travel back in time to prevent it. And so forth, and so on…

A huge difference was that at first, we didn't have the concept of closed loops as a part of our Time Travel rules. Time travel was always going to be a key component of the game, but we didn't have the idea that time travel changes those characters have been on their return to the future. However, this was extremely complicated. We constantly had to deal with questions like "what if character A goes back in time and makes a change, but then you play as character B—are they aware of things having changed or not, and how do you reconcile with that either way?"

Worse, it was a huge problem for the show, because none of those characters had any connection to the changes being made, but they would still have to be affected by them—which essentially meant that whatever you saw in a previous episode would always be invalidated by your actions. That made keeping track of everything incredibly complicated.

Perhaps most importantly, though, our Time Travel didn't make a lot of sense. Classic paradoxes like "if you go back and kill your earlier self, do you also die, and if you do, then who killed that earlier self, because you couldn't do that because you were already dead" popped up left and right. It got very convoluted.

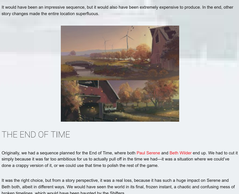
The single biggest story change that led to a lot of other changes was when we decided to just bite the bullet and say that nothing ever changes. It wasn't an easy decision; it meant that a lot of the dramatic choices that were available to us before were already impossible. But it was the right choice.

THE JOYCE FARM

Originally, much of what now takes place in William's workshop in Act 2 happened in the Joyce family home outside of Riverport proper. It was an opportunity to explore more of Jack's background, his relationship with his brother, and their family. Going through the house where he grew up would have been an interesting sequence, and a nearby barn would have been where William originally constructed his first Time Machine.

Not only that, but we also intended to have Monarch assault the location and blow up the house, adding to Jack's resentment of Serene—not only did he take away Jack's brother, his men destroyed the place that held all of his childhood memories. Furthermore, this was to take place while Jack was still inside the Riverpoint building, but a stutter was to hit at the last moment, causing Jack to make his way through the house even as it explodes, reverses and fast forwards in slow motion.

It would have been an impressive sequence, but it would also have been extremely expensive to produce. In the end, other story changes made the entire location superfluous.



THE END OF TIME

Originally, we had a sequence planned for the End of Time, where both Paul Serene and Beth Winter end up. We had to cut it because it would be far too ambitious for us to actually pull off in the time we had—it was a situation where we could've done a crappy version of it, or we could use the time to polish the rest of the game.

It was the right choice, but from a story perspective, it was a real loss, because it has such a huge impact on Serene and Beth both, albeit in different ways. We would have seen the world in its final, frozen instant, a chaotic and confusing mess of broken timelines, which would have been haunted by the Shifters.

ESCAPE FROM THE MANSION

Originally, the escape from the Monarch mansion was a much more complex sequence. In a very early version of it, instead of Beth and Dr. Arnaral, Jack was accompanied by Dr. Arnaral and Kate Ogawa (Serene's ex-wife, in those early days, and a traitor to Monarch—her role eventually went through enormous changes and morphed into Clarice Ogawa, who commands Monarch troops over the radio and interviews Jack throughout Quantum Break).

They escaped the mansion in a car while pursued by Monarch, and eventually crashed the car into a Monarch roadblock as they approached the bridge. Then they fought their way through a nearby construction site on foot and made to cross the bridge, only to have the ship crash into it in mid-escape.

In the end, numerous story changes rendered the entire sequence invalid.

THE MISSILE SILO

One scrapped level involved a secret Monarch R&D facility built into an old missile silo. Jack and other characters had to infiltrate it in order to steal vital technology from Monarch.

This was a complicated sequence, and while we ended up not using it due to numerous story changes and scoping decisions, conceptually, much of the R&D facility we DID build stems from the silo.

THE CONVENTION CENTER

An idea that never quite made it into the game on any real level, the Riverpoint Convention Center was a bit of a popular favorite within the studio. The idea was that a train was derailed by a stutter (a concept that we recycled into the opening of Act 1) and smashed its way into a convention center in the middle of a big game event. In addition to people fleeing the destruction, we could have essentially turned the whole place into a love letter to geekdom even as a stuttering train smashed its way into the place.

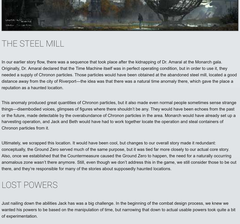
With Microsoft as our publisher, we could have secured Master Chief stakees or Minecraft stands, and generally made it seem like an actual game event.

It would have been fun, but it would be admitted, entirely self-indulgent—it added nothing to the story, and really just distracted us from the main goal.

THE WORLD FAIR

At one point, there was the idea of having a huge firefight near the Bradbury Swimming Pool. For that, we needed an interesting space that the fight could move in, because the pool building itself had limited use as a combat space, and the actual pool area was something we knew we had to reserve for the finale. So we had to come up with something nearby.

In keeping with the Bradbury area's semi-abandoned and run-down nature, we wanted something that had the weight of time on it, and we hit on the idea of an old World Fair, left to rot for decades. Visually, it was striking and fit our themes. But as is so often the case, in the end, we had no use for it either in the story or in the actual level flow, so we dropped it.



THE STEEL MILL

In our earlier story flow, there was a sequence that took place after the kidnapping of Dr. Arnaral at the Monarch gala. Originally, Dr. Arnaral declared that the Time Machine itself was in perfect operating condition, but in order to use it, they needed a supply of Chronon particles. Those particles would have been obtained at the abandoned steel mill, located a good distance away from the city of Riverport—the idea was that there was a natural time anomaly there, which gave the place a reputation as a haunted location.

This anomaly produced great quantities of Chronon particles, but it also made even normal people sometimes sense strange things, hallucinate, and experience déjà vu—the perfect place where there could be any. They would have been echoes from the past or the future, made detectable by the overabundance of Chronon particles in the area. Monarch would have already set up a harvesting operation, and Jack and Beth would have had to work together to evade the operation and steal containers of Chronon particles from it.

Ultimately, we scrapped this location. It would have been cool, but changes to our overall story made it redundant conceptually, the Ground Zero served much of the same purpose, but it was tied far more closely to our actual core story. Also, once we established that the Countermeasure Device created the Ground Zero as a side effect, the need for a naturally occurring anomalous zone wasn't there anymore. Still, even though we don't address this in the game, we still consider those to be out there, and they're responsible for many of the stories about supposedly haunted locations.

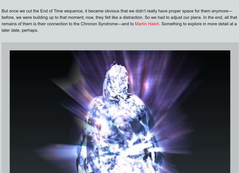
LOST POWERS

Just nailing down the abilities Jack has was a big challenge. In the beginning of the combat design process, we knew we wanted his powers to be based on the manipulation of time, but narrowing that down to actual usable powers took quite a bit of experimentation.

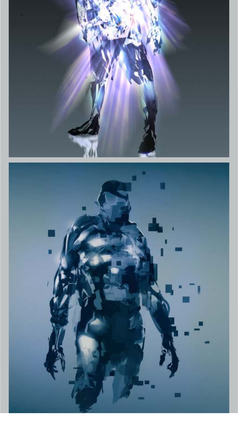
In the beginning, Quantum Break was conceived more as a cover shooter, with a more tactical approach to combat. This was reflected in the earliest Time Powers that we created. For example, there was a time-out that slightly slowed enemy. After a while, the other Jack would vanish again. Unfortunately, we never managed to make it feel like it was fun. Making it feel like this truly gave you an advantage without being too useful was a very hard balance to strike, and the various technical challenges involved didn't help. Still, the concept was great, and we toyed with the idea of creating a wire variety of Jacks, some of which would be helpful and some of which would be hostile. We also considered a Time Power that would create a wall of fire for firefight. The idea of a Jack wearing nothing but a towel, holding a rubber ducky, sometimes appearing in the battlefield is fun—but the production realities involved with all this made it six drop it. Possibly, some common sense was involved as well.

As for the Rewind power, it always proved to be rewind the gameplay situation by some seconds. This in itself is not a new concept in games, but we added a twist: it would actually be Jack travelling back in time a few seconds. At that point, the "original" Jack would still follow the path the player took under AI control until he hit the point where he decided to travel back, at which point he would vanish, but the player-controlled Jack would be free to act in a different way. This allowed for maneuvers like making a two-pronged attack on an enemy all by yourself. It was fun, but it was also quite confusing, as well as another complicated technical challenge. Furthermore, as we settled on the concept of closed loops in our Time Travel logic, it just didn't fit.

SHIFTERS



The concept of Shifters—all of them, known internally simply as "Time Monsters"—was with us for a long time. The idea of these beings that lived somewhere beyond time was an engaging one, and presented an interesting counterpoint to the human enemies from Monarch. Indeed, at one point, they were supposed to be another, very different enemy type for you to fight. Then they were conceived as more of an environmental hazard, something that would kill you if you let it touch you, and you'd have to manage your distance from them.

The idea was always that they would only show up in stutters, being unable to exist in normal time.

But once we cut the End of Time sequence, it became obvious that we didn't really have proper space for them anymore—before, we were building up to that moment; now, they felt like a distraction. So we had to adjust our plans. In the end, all that remains of them is their connection to the Chronon Syndrome—and to Martin Hatch. Something to explore in more detail at a later date, perhaps.